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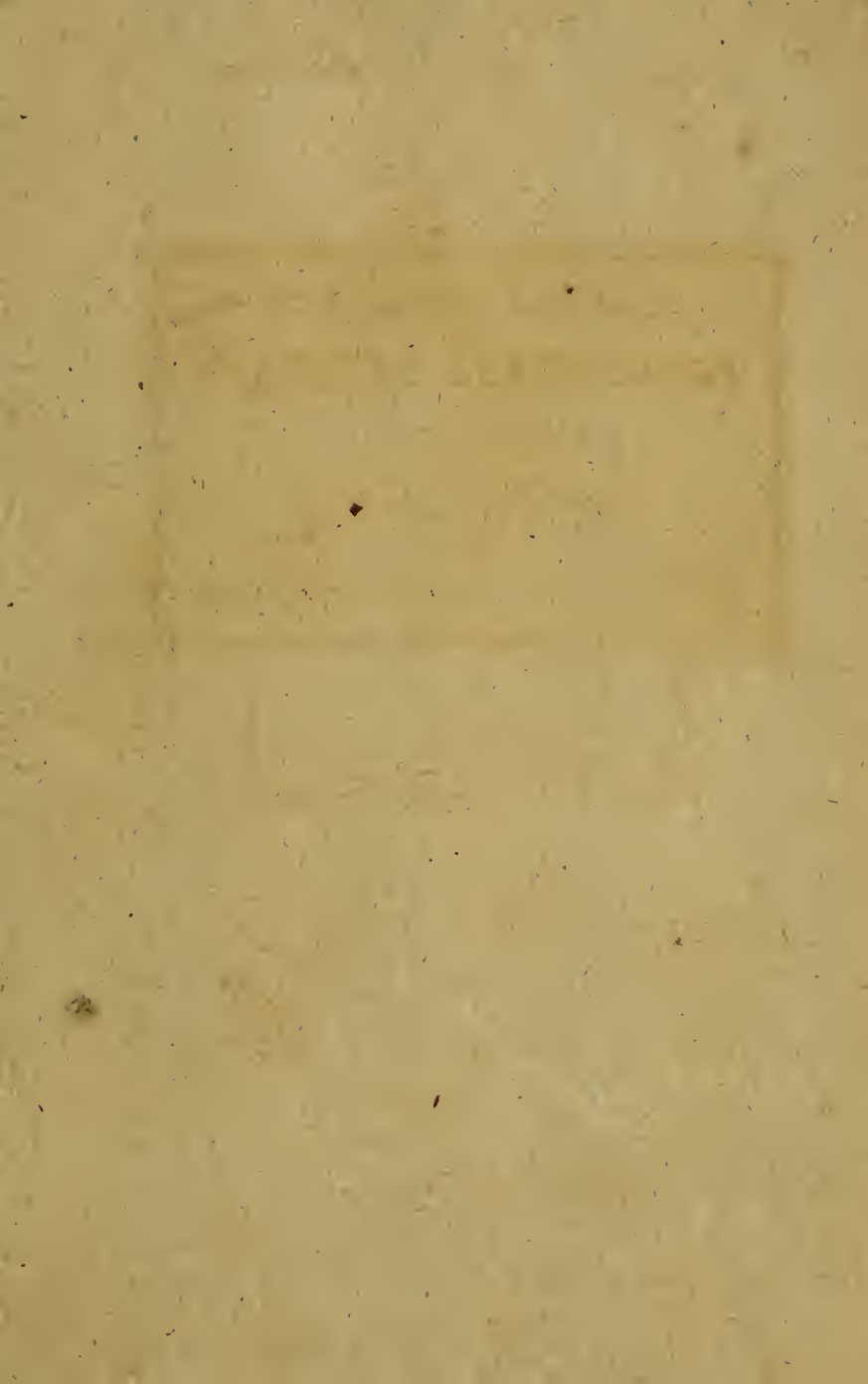
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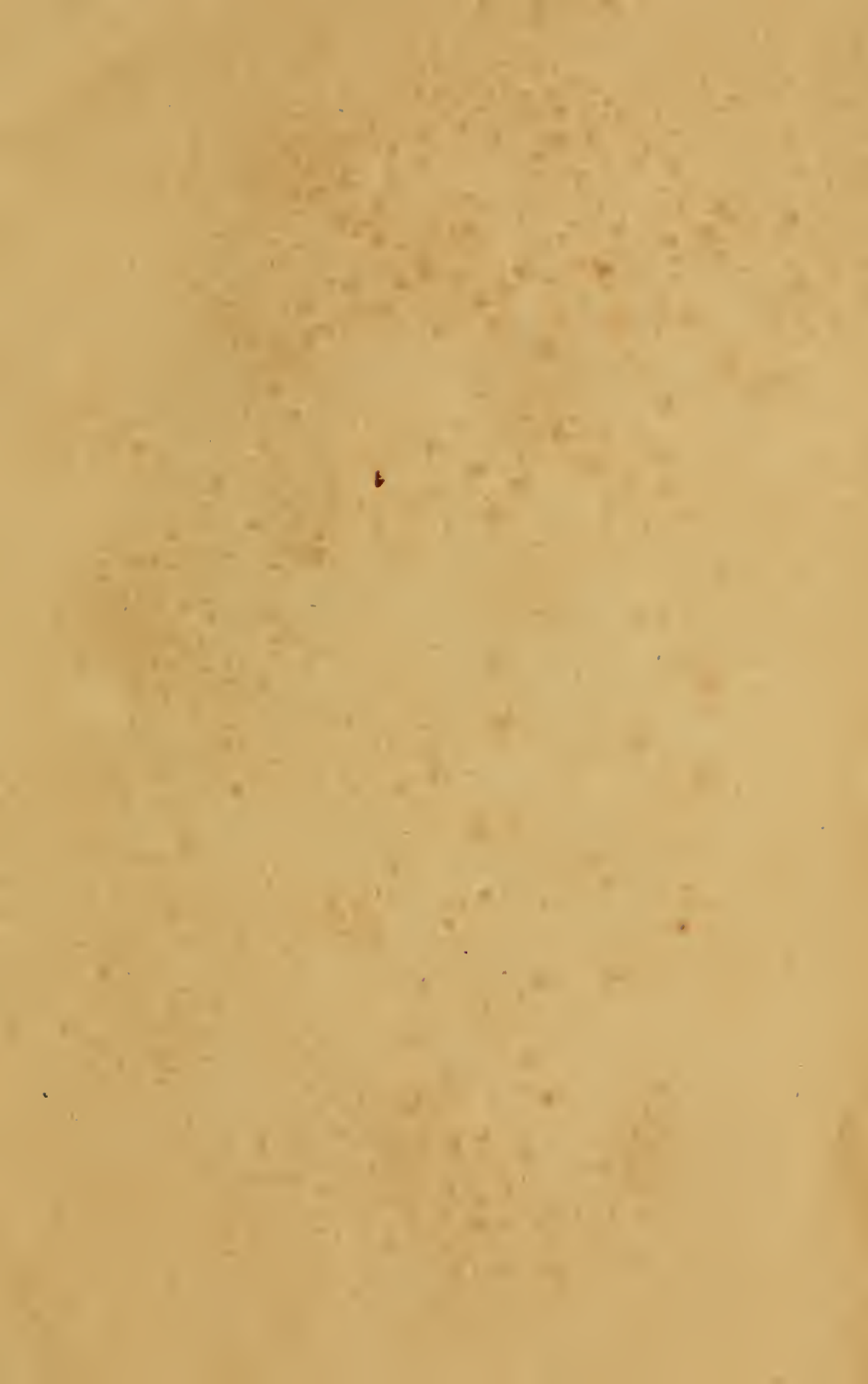
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THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

ROMANS

ANALYSED,

FROM A

DEVELOPEMENT OF THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES

IN THE

ROMAN CHURCH,

BY WHICH IT WAS OCCASIONED.

.....
BY JOHN JONES.
.....

There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. *Matt. x. 26.*

Και την του Κυριου ημων μακροθυμιαν, σωτηριαν ηγεισθε· καθως και ο αγαπητος ημων αδελφος Παυλος, κατα την αυτω δοθεισαν σοφιαν, εγραψεν υμιν· ως και εν πασαις ταις επισολαις λαλων εν αυτοις περι τουτων, εν οίς εσι δυσνοητα τινα, α οι αμαθεις και ασηρικτοι σρεβλουσιν, ως και τας λοιπας γραφας, προς την ιδιαν αυτων απωλειαν. *2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.*

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PREFACE.

THIS small Volume was at first intended to be a continuation of two other Volumes which the author has already laid before the Public. But he has since thought it advisable to render it independent of that Work. For this reason it became necessary to prefix to this Analysis of the Epistle to the Romans a brief view of the principal circumstances which occasioned its publication. He, however, deemed it expedient to refer occasionally to the preceding volumes. But the reader is exempted from the absolute necessity of purchasing them, though he would find, it is hoped, some satisfaction in consulting the passages to which references are made.

In quoting the words of the Apostle, the Analyser sometimes gives an entirely new translation, though more generally he has adopted the version of the late illustrious and ever memorable scholar and Patriot, GILBERT WAKEFIELD. That version, however, he has taken the liberty to change, wherever the original is, in his opinion, mistaken, or inadequately expressed.

In explaining this obscure Epistle, the author, it will be seen, has made little or no use of the labours of other critics and commentators. This omission requires an apology; as it may seem inconsistent with that humble, teachable, and candid spirit (essential to the enquirer after religious truth), which is ever prone to

PREFACE.

look around for the assistance of others, and dreads relying on its own exertions. His object, it should be observed, is simply to lay before the public the result of his own enquiries. This he wished to do with all possible brevity; and this end could not be answered, if he stopped to cite useless authorities, to approve, or to controvert, the explanations already given by learned men. The practice of loading the page with citations and references often serves to display rather the learning of the critic, than to promote the benefit of the reader. The truly learned seldom need such references, and the previously uninformed have not the means nor the ability of profiting by them. Passages, in ancient authors, however, containing the evidences of facts, ought always to be produced with fidelity; and in all that is requisite to this purpose the present writer, he trusts, is not materially deficient. In examining the evangelical records, it has been his habit to enquire, as though no other person had ever enquired before him, and with the same freedom and independence he now communicates his thoughts to the world.

The attempts that have hitherto been made to explain the Scriptures appear to him very defective. The efforts of classical divines to elucidate obscure terms and phrases by parallel passages, collected from Greek and Roman authors, are commendable, and in part successful. But the writers of the New Testament were not guided by the rules of classic composition. The situation in which they were placed alone contains the causes of their peculiar phraseologies. The new views which the gospel unfolded to their understandings, and the new direction it impressed on their conduct, obliged them often to connect peculiar significations with their terms, and to form them in combinations unexampled.

PREFACE.

Besides this, the Apostles had no opportunities nor inclination to study the sources of attic elegance. They were men engaged in the pursuit of an important end, to the accomplishment of which every moment of their time, and every faculty of their minds were devoted. The letters, which they respectively addressed to the Churches, contain not abstract or speculative matters, but respect matters of practical importance and actual occurrence. They were called forth by the peculiar and local circumstances of the several societies to which they were sent. The development of those circumstances, and a comparative view of them with the Apostolic writings, must consequently be the only rational and effectual way of elucidating whatever is obscure, and ascertaining whatever is doubtful in them. This is the main object, to which the labours of this writer in analysing the epistles will be directed. It is an object, it will be allowed, new, arduous and important; and, if executed in a manner adequate to its merits the execution will, on one hand, establish the genuineness and truth of the Apostolic writings, and demonstrate, on the other, the falsehood of those creeds of human invention, by which the divine lustre of the Gospel has been tarnished, and its efficacious influence counteracted.

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THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION

INTRODUCED INTO

R O M E.

IN the following attempt to analyse the Epistles of Paul, and those of the other Apostles, I shall consider them, what they really are, as *letters*, and, like all compositions of this kind, turning entirely upon the peculiar circumstances of the individual people to whom they were addressed. The object, then, which at present, I propose to accomplish, is, in the first place, to give a brief developement of the leading events which distinguished the *Roman Church*, and of the opinions and practices of those who took the lead in it; and secondly, to examine, in relation to the facts thus developed, the language of Paul in the celebrated but obscure Epistle which he wrote to that society.

It is a remarkable phenomenon in the history of the Christian religion, that no account has been transmitted to posterity by what means, and at what time it was first introduced into the metropolis of the empire; and how was laid the foundation of a church, which in all ages made so conspicuous, though melancholy a figure among the other churches of Christendom. And this phenomenon seems to have led a modern writer, much respected for his learning and talents, and still more so for his integrity, to question the genuineness of the letter which our Apostle sent to the Roman converts.

If we duly reflect upon the unrivalled wisdom and benevolence which were displayed in the character of our Lord; if we properly consider the stupendous works which he performed, and his open and public manner of performing them, we may well infer that in no place however distant, that indeed had any intercourse with Judea, could he long remain unobserved and unknown. The glad tidings which he proclaimed as the Messenger of heaven, the wonders which he exhibited in attestation of his claims, and the conformity of those claims with the expectation of mankind, must, without delay, have excited universal attention, and proved the means of conveying his fame not only to Rome, betwixt which and Judea was maintained a constant and direct communication, but to the remotest regions of the Roman empire. What we may thus fairly infer from reflection upon the character and miracles of Jesus, is attested to a certain extent by the authentic historians of his life. Matthew informs us, that, when he began to heal diseases, his fame went throughout all Syria, Chap. iv. 24; and Luke adds, that it spread over the whole surrounding region, iv. 14.

The above inference, corroborated by the evangelical records, cannot but dispose us to regard as by no means improbable the substance of the following narrative written by a person, who professed to have been in Rome at the time when the fame of Christ had reached that city. "In the midst of these thoughts and difficulties, a certain report commencing with the spring season, under the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, insensibly prevailed in every place, and pervaded the world as being truly the message of God, and unable

to retain in silence and secrecy the Divine Will, Every where it grew greater and stronger ; saying, that a certain man in Judea, making his first appearance in the spring, announced to the Jews the kingdom of the eternal God, of which he affirmed every one that led a virtuous life might partake : and in order to prove that he proclaimed this blessing by divine inspiration, he wrought many surprising signs and wonders by his command alone, having received this power from God. For he caused the deaf to hear, and the blind to see ; the lame he enabled to walk, and the cripple to stand erect ; he healed every disease, and banished all demons. Scaly lepers recovered their sound state by only looking upon him at a distance. Even the dead, which were brought to him, he raised to life ; and there was nothing which he was not able to do. And, as the time advanced, the report of him was confirmed by multitudes that had come from that country ; so that it was no longer a report, but a real fact. And meetings were now held in different places for the sake of enquiring who the person, that had thus appeared, might be, and what he intended to proclaim." Clem. Hom. i. 4.

Now the spread of the fame of Jesus in the capital, as here related, and the reception of his religion by multitudes of Jews and of Gentiles, together with the commotions necessarily excited by the dispute respecting him, were, it is contended, the circumstances which occasioned the banishment of the Jewish and Egyptian nations from Italy by order of the Government. The testimonies of Josephus, Philo, Suetonius, and Tacitus, I will here first produce ; and then endeavour to prove

the truth of this assertion. The account which Josephus gives of their expulsion is as follows :

“ A Jew resided there (in Rome), who, having been accused of transgressing the laws, fled from his country to avoid the punishment which threatened him. In every respect he was a wicked man. During his residence at Rome, he professed to unfold the wisdom of the Mosaic laws, in conjunction with three other men, who in every view resembled himself. With these associated Fulvia, a woman of rank, that had become a convert to the Jewish religion, and whom they prevailed upon to send, for the temple of Jerusalem, presents of purple and gold. These they received and appropriated to their own use ; which indeed was their motive at first in making the request. Tiberius, when informed of this by Saturninus, the husband of the unjustly accused Fulvia, commanded all the Jews to be expelled from the city. The men to the number of four thousand, were forced into the army, by order of the Senate, and sent to the island of Sardinia : but the greater part of them, determined to preserve their laws inviolate, refused to serve as soldiers. These were put to death. And thus, because of the wickedness of four men, the Jews were driven from the city.”*

* Ην ανηρ Ιουδαϊος, φυγας μεν της αυτου, κατηγορια τε παραβασεως νομων και δεει τιμωριας της επ αυτοις, πονηρος δε εις τα παντα. και δε τοτε εν τε Ρωμη διαιτωμενος προσεποιειτο μεν εξηγεισθαι σοφιαν νομων των Μωυσεως, προσποιησαμενος τε τρεις ανδρας εις τα παντα δημοιοτροπους. τουτοις επιφοιτησασαν Φουλβιαν την εν αξιωματι γυναικων, και νομιμοις προσεληλυθειαν τοις Ιουδαϊκοις, πειθουσι πορφυραν και χρυσιον εις το εν Ιερουσαλυμοις ιερον διαπεμψασθαι. και λαβοντες, επι χρειας τοις οικειοις αναλωμασιν αυτα ποιουνται, εφ' οπερ και το πρωτον η αιτηθις επερασσετο. και ο Τιβεριοσ, αποσημαινει γαρ

The following is the narrative of Tacitus respecting the same event: "In the same year was brought before the Senate, a motion for abolishing the Egyptian and Jewish rites: and it was decreed that four thousand of that slavish race, who were infected with that superstition, should be conveyed into the island of Sardinia, there to have their robberies restrained: where, if they perished through the severity of the climate, the loss would not be great; and that the rest of them should leave Italy, unless within an appointed time they should have relinquished their profane rites."*

With this accords, in the main, the relation given by Suetonius. "Foreign rites, the Egyptian and the Jewish, Tiberius suppressed, and compelled those who were fettered with that superstition to burn their sacred vestments and utensils. The Jewish youths he distributed, under the pretence of a military oath, into provinces of a severe climate; while the remainder of that nation, with others of similar profession, he removed from the city under the penalty of perpetual slavery, unless they had obeyed."†

προς αυτον φιλος των Σαβουρηνος της Φουλβιας ανηρ επισκηπει της γυναικος, κελευει παν το Ιουδαιικον της Ρωμης απελασθηναι. οι δε υπατοι τετρακισχιλιους ανθρωπων εξ αυτων ξρατολογησαντες επεμψαν εις Σαρδω την νησον. πλειους δε εκολασαν μη θελοντας ξρατευεσθαι, δια φυλακην των πατριων νομων. και οι μεν δια κακιαν τεσσαρων ανδρων ελαυνοντο της πολεως. Ant. Jud. Lib. xviii. Cap. 3, 5.

* Actum et de Sacris Ægyptiis Judaicisque pellendis. Factumque patrum consultum, ut quatuor millia libertini generis, ea superstitione infecta, in insulam Sardiniam vherentur, coercendis illic latrociniiis, et si gravitate cæli interiissent, vile damnum: cæteri cederent Italia, nisi certam ante diem, profanos ritus exuissent. An. ii. 85.

† Externas ceremonias Ægyptios Judaicosque ritus compescuit, coactis qui superstitione ea tenebantur, religiosas vestes cum instrumento.

The incident here recorded, Dion Cassius has passed over in silence : but it is thus noticed by Philo. “ All nations, though prejudiced against the Jews, have been careful not to abolish the Jewish rites ; and the same caution was preserved in the reign of Tiberius : though indeed the Jews in Italy have been distressed by the machinations of Sejanus. For after his death the emperor became, and that immediately, sensible that the accusations, alleged against the Jews in Italy, were lying calumnies, the mere inventions of Sejanus ; who was eager to devour a nation that alone, or chiefly would, he knew, be likely to oppose his impious designs and measures. And to the constituted authorities in every place, he (Tiberius) sent orders not to molest in their several cities the men of that nation, excepting the guilty alone (who were very few), and not to suppress any of their institutions, but, on the contrary, to regard as a trust committed to their care, both the people themselves, as possessing peaceable dispositions, and their laws, which like oil brace them with stability of character.”*

omni comburere ; Judæorum juventutem, per speciem sacramenti, in provincias gravioris cæli distribuit ; reliquos gentis ejusdem, et similia sectantes urbe summovit, sub pœna perpetuæ servitutis, nisi obtemperassent. In vita Tiberij. 36.

* Τοι γαρ ον οι πανταχου παντες, ει και φυσει διεκριντο προς Ιουδαιους ουκ ευμενως, ευλαβως ειχον επι καθαιρεσει τινος των Ιουδαιικων νομων προσαψασθαι. και επι Τιβεριου μεντοι του αυτοι τροπον, και τοι των εν Ιταλια παρακινήθεντων ήνικα Σηιανος εσευωρει την επιθεσιν. εγνω γαρ, ευθεως εγνω, μετα την εκεινου τελευτην, οτι τα κατηγορηθεντα των ακηκοτων την Ρωμην Ιουδαιων, ψευδεις ησαν διαβολαι, πλασματα Σηιανου το εθνος αναρπασαι θελοντος. οπερ η μονον η μαλιζα

The first thing necessary to be remarked, is, that the narratives of the above historians refer to *one* and the *same* event. Had the Jewish and the Egyptian rites been suppressed, and those nations expelled from Italy, at *two different* times in the reign of Tiberius, some one of these writers would have intimated it. But no such intimation is given either by Josephus, or Tacitus, or Suetonius. Besides this, if you compare their relations, you will instantly perceive that they are descriptive of facts, the identity of which is proved by their peculiarity. The distress of the Jews in Italy, which Philo takes notice of, must therefore be the temporary suppression of their institutions, and their expulsion from Rome, as is recorded by the three other authors. And even this writer could not with propriety have alluded to the molestation of his countrymen, on one occasion, if they had been molested at different times, and on different occasions. This point being settled, let us take a general view of the time, in which the expulsion of the Jews took place.

From Josephus we may infer that it occurred about the period of our Lord's crucifixion, and previously to the removal of Pilote from the government of Judea. With this inference Philo who flourished in

ὅπει βουλαις ανοσοις και πραξεσιν αντιβησομενοι ὑπερ του παρασποκ-
 δηθηνακι κινδυνευσαντος αυτοκρατορος, και τοις πανταχοσι χειροτονου-
 μεωις ἱπαρχοις επεσηκηψε παρηγορησαι μεν τοις κατα πολεις των
 απο του εθνους, ὡς ουκ επι παντας προβασης της επεξελευσεως, αλλ'
 επι μόνους τους αιτιους (ολιγοι δε ησαν) κινησαι δε μηδεν των εξ εθους,
 αλλα και παρακαταθηκηνη εχειν, τουστε ανδρας ὡς ειρηνικους τας
 φυσεις, και τα νομιμα ὡς αλειφοντα προς ευσθειαν. Vol. ii. p. 369.

those days concurs; since by ascribing the distress of the Jews to the influence of Sejanus, he brings it down to the time in which that minister had reached the zenith of his power, and which was soon followed by the forfeiture of his life. The conspiracy of Sejanus was detected, and he himself put to death at the end of the seventeenth, or in the beginning of the eighteenth year of Tiberius; and the distress which he brought upon the Jews in Italy, might have happened a year or two sooner, i. e. a year or two after the crucifixion of our Lord.* From the place which Tacitus has assigned to the narrative in his *Annals*, we might infer indeed, that the disturbance here spoken of, happened so early as the death of *Germanicus*, which occurred in the eighteenth year of our Lord's age. But if any regard be due to the authority of Philo and Josephus, this inference can by no means be admitted: and we shall presently see, that the Roman historian had an adequate motive to misrepresent the true date of the affair.

Having premised these remarks, I proceed to prove, that the men molested in consequence of the accusations of Sejanus, and in behalf of whom, after his death, Tiberius issued an edict to the præfects of the provinces, were principally Jewish converts to the Christian religion. The proofs which I shall adduce in support of this proposition, are the following—The testimonies of Tertullian, of Orosius, and Eusebius—Passages in the Apostolic writings, and in the

* I follow the chronology of Dr. Priestley, who has concluded, from very probable reasons, that our Saviour was crucified in the latter end of the very year in which his ministry commenced. See his *Greek Harmony*, p. 45. Some farther light, I presume, is thrown upon this subject, in Vol. ii. of the *Development*, p. 143.

Antiquities of Josephus—Inferences drawn from Dion Cassius, and Seneca—Subjects of dispute connected with the expulsion in question—And, lastly, passages in the writings of certain Jews.

I. Tertullian, Eusebius, and Orosius plainly suppose that the men, whom Philo calls *Jews*, and whom he could call by no other name, since the Christian was not yet in existence, were the professors of Christianity.

I here subjoin their words on the subject, adopting the version of Dr. Lardner. “Tiberius,” asserts Tertullian, “in whose time the Christian religion had its rise, having received from Palestine, in Syria, an account of such things as manifested our Saviour’s divinity, proposed to the Senate, and giving his own vote as first in his favour, that he should be placed among the Gods. The Senate refused, because he had himself declined that honour. Nevertheless, the emperor persisted in his own opinion; and ordered that, if any accused the Christians, they should be punished.” Apol. Cap. 5, or Lard. Vol. vii. p. 232.

Eusebius, treading in the footsteps of Tertullian, writes to this effect: “When the wonderful resurrection of our Saviour and his ascension to heaven were in the mouths of all men, it being an ancient custom for the governors of provinces to write to the emperor, and give him an account of new and remarkable occurrences, that he might not be ignorant of any thing; our Saviour’s resurrection being much talked of throughout all Palestine, Pilate informed the emperor of it, as likewise of his miracles, which he had heard of; and that being raised up after he had been put to death,

he was already believed by many to be a God. And it is said, that Tiberius referred the matter to the Senate; but that they refused their consent, under a pretence, that it had not been approved of by them; there being an ancient law that no one should be deified among the Romans, without an order of the Senate; but indeed because the saving and divine doctrine of the Gospel needed not to be confirmed by human judgment and authority. However, Tiberius persisted in his former sentiment, and allowed not any thing to be done that was prejudicial to the doctrine of Christ." His. Eccles. Lib. ii. Cap. 2.

Orosius following, in one respect, the authority of Tertullian, and in another, the narrative of Philo, writes to this purpose. "Tiberius proposed to the Senate, that Christ should be made a God, with his own vote in his favour. The Senate moved with indignation that it had not been, as was usual, proposed for them to determine respecting the reception of his religion, rejected his deification; and decreed that the Christians, by an edict, should be banished from the city; especially as Sejanus, the Præfect of Tiberius, most obstinately resisted the reception of his faith." Aput. Lard. Vol. vii. p. 243.

Now, Do not these passages clearly relate to the very persons, whom Philo represents as first molested at the instigation of Sejanus, and afterwards protected by the emperor Tiberius? The authors of them, therefore, understood that the sufferers were the followers of Jesus.

II. In support of this opinion, I adduce, in the second place, passages from the Apostolic writings.

One of the chief accusations, which Sejanus alleged against the Jews, seems to have been this, that they were enemies to the State, and that they entertained the wish of raising to universal empire a person of their own nation. This charge was unhappily too much countenanced by the mistaken notion, which the first converts, among the Jews, cherished respecting the Messiah's kingdom. Supposing it would be temporal in its nature, and boundless in its extent, the Jewish believers in Rome were led to give an undue opposition to the measures of the existing government. Their error and misconduct in this respect demanded the admonition of Apostolic authority; and if Tiberius, after having discovered that the representations of Sejanus, were, in the main, but the aspersions of a malignant adversary, dispatched, as Philo attests, to the governors, an edict to protect, in their respective provinces, those of the Jews who were peaceable and virtuous, but to punish the guilty few; and if farther, those Jews, as Tertullian and others after him understood, were in reality Christians, we might reasonably expect that, in the letters addressed to some of the Churches, the Apostles should by all means recommend to the converts, to pay becoming obedience and deference to the magistrates, and at the same time remind them, that, if innocent and obedient they had nothing to fear, but on the contrary had to hope protection and praise, from the civil powers, while signal punishment awaited the refractory and the evil doer. And in this expectation we shall not be disappointed. Hear, in the first place, the words of Paul to the Christians in Rome; " Let every soul submit itself to powers in authority: for as there is no power but from

God, these powers are appointed by God. Whosoever, therefore, setteth itself against the power, opposeth the appointment of God; and such opposers will bring punishment upon themselves. For these rulers are not a terror TO THE GOOD, BUT TO EVIL DOERS. Dost thou wish then not to be afraid of their power? Do what is right, and thou wilt be praised by it: for it is God's minister for thy good. BUT IF THOU DO EVIL, BE AFRAID; because this power carrieth not the sword in vain: for it is the minister of God executing punishment UPON EVERY ONE THAT DOETH EVIL." Rom. xiii. 1—4.

Read next the following exhortation addressed by the Apostle Peter, to the Jews that were dispersed in Gentile countries. "Beloved, I exhort you, as sojourners and pilgrims, keep yourselves from those fleshly lusts that war against the soul; having your course of life blameless among the Gentiles, that, wherein men (before they yet enquire) speak against you as evil doers, they may glorify God for the good works which, after a day of enquiry, they have seen with their eyes. Submit yourselves, therefore, to every appointment of man for the Lord's sake; to the king as supreme; TO GOVERNORS AS COMMISSIONED BY HIM, FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF EVIL DOERS, AND THE PRAISE OF THEM THAT DO WELL." 1 Pet. ii. 11—15.

The Jewish like the Egyptian Gnostics, practised the arts of magic, and indulged in all those excesses of vice, which disgraced not only their profession as Christians, but their nature as men. They were therefore, the guilty few whom the magistrates had in charge

to punish. And these magistrates, instead of praying for them in the meek spirit of Christian benevolence, they in return opposed, cursed and vilified. Hence Paul, having, in the beginning of his first epistle to Timothy, noticed the Gnostic teachers, presently gives him this advice: "Now, then, I advise first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all in high stations, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all veneration and respect." ii. 1. In the preceding chapter he thus, I conceive, partly alludes to the edict of Tiberius, which was levelled not against the righteous but the guilty. "NO LAW LIETH AGAINST RIGHTEOUS MEN, but against lawless and ungovernable, ungodly and sinful men, unholy and impure; murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers, murderers of others, whoremongers, men of unnatural lusts, enslavers of mankind, deceivers, false swearers, and whatever else is contrary to the wholesome doctrine of that glorious Gospel of the Holy God, with which I am entrusted." 1 Tim. i. 9—12.

We meet with a similar allusion in his epistle to the Galatians. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; they are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, image-worship, magic, enmities, strifes, rivalries, passions, quarrels, separations, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: concerning which I tell you before hand, as indeed I told you heretofore, that the doers of such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: AGAINST SUCH THINGS AS THESE THERE IS NO LAW." Gal. v.

19—24. The assertion, that no law existed in force against the fruit of the Spirit, which is peace, love, &c. implies that a law *did* exist against those who were guilty of adultery, magic, murder, and of the other above-mentioned crimes. The language of Paul in this and the preceding paragraph accords precisely with that of Philo, who, in explicit terms, asserts that the imperial edict was intended to protect such of the Jews as were peaceable and virtuous, and to punish only the wicked. The wicked meant, were such as disturbed the public peace, and practised the arts of magic, among the devotees of which the Gnostic teachers, without exception, claimed a distinguished rank. According to the author of the *Recognitions*, the guilty whom the governors of the provinces had orders to punish were Simon Magus and his associates, who, we shall presently see, were the first teachers of Gnosticism. The following are the words of that writer. He puts them in the mouth of Cornelius mentioned in Acts, Chap. x. “Cæsar hath ordered that maleficent men should be sought out and punished in the city of Rome and throughout the provinces; of these a great number have already been destroyed. I will therefore divulge, by the medium of friends, that I am come to take this magician (Simon); that I was sent by Cæsar for this purpose, in order that he also with others his associates might be punished.”*

* See *Recog. Lib. x. 55*, or *Vol. ii. p. 248*, of the *Development*, where the original is quoted. The assertion of this unknown author is thus confirmed by Dion Cassius:—*Omnes alios, tam astrologos, quam magos, aut alio quovis modo divinantes, peregrinos necavit: Cives, quotquot etiamnum neglecto priore edicto, quo prohibitus fuerat usus harum artium omnibus, qui in urbe essent, tractare hujusmodi res deferrentur, extorres egit. Lib. lvii. 16.*

This paragraph, be it remarked, like the above passages of the Apostles Paul and Peter, refers clearly to the edict of Tiberius mentioned by Philo ; and hence, like them, derives its true explanation. If, therefore, these references be admitted, it follows, that not only Tertullian and other ecclesiastical writers after him, but that the Apostles themselves, and the unknown author of the *Clementine Homilies*, understood the Jews, at first molested, and afterwards protected by the emperor, to be converts to the Christian religion.

But to this it may be objected, that the operation of such an edict, if ever issued, must have expired with the imperial author ; and, therefore, could not be alluded to in writings published under a succeeding prince. To this objection I answer, that the edict in question was by its nature such as could not formally be repealed, its declared object being to protect the peaceable, and to punish only the guilty ; and as it could not be repealed, the magistrates were bound to act upon its authority under the succeeding emperors : that it continued to produce, with other salutary provisions, as Philo informs us, the happiest effects for two years after the death of Tiberius : that, when the madness of Caligula violated it in the indiscriminate persecution of the Jews, Claudius, at the solicitation of Agrippa, virtually restored it to its original force, by sending a similar edict to the governors of the provinces ; and that the apostolic epistles were published, while this last edict yet operated in favour of the Jewish nation. The edict of Claudius, to which I allude, is recorded by the Jewish historian, and is in part as follows. “ I, therefore, think it proper that the Jews under us, in all the world, should without opposition

retain their paternal customs : and upon that people, I enjoin to use, with more moderation, this my clemency in their behalf, and not bring into contempt the superstitions of other nations, but adhere to their own laws. It is my wish that the governors of cities, of colonies, and municipal towns, both within and without Italy—that, also Princes and men in power should by their ministers transcribe this mandate, and have it so posted up, as to be easily read from the ground.”*

A few remarks are necessary to place the cause and the design of this edict in its true light.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the progress of his religion, divided the Jewish nation into two parties. The support given to his claims on the part of his friends, and the opposition made to them by his enemies, excited violent commotions, not only in Judea, but even in Rome and in all the provinces. The commotions which were raised in the metropolis, Suetonius expressly ascribes to the instigation of Christ, and it was to allay the contentions, which from the same cause prevailed in Egypt and in other parts of the empire, that Claudius issued this and a preceding edict related by Josephus.

* Καλως ουν εχειν και Ιουδαιους τους εν παντι τω υφ ημας κοσμου τα πατρια εδη ανεπικωλυτως φυλασσειν, δις και αυτοις ηδη νυν παρ-αγγελω μου ταυτη τη φιλανθρωπια επιεικεφερον χρησθαι, και μη τας δεισιδαιμονιας των αλλων εθνων εξουθενιζειν, τους ιδιους δε νομους φυλασσειν· τουτο μου το διαταγμα τους αρχοντας των πολεων, και κωλωνειων και μονικιπιων, των εν τη Ιταλια και εκτος, βασιλεις τε και δυνασας δια των ιδιων πρεσβευτων εγγραψασθαι βουλομαι, εκκειμενον τε εχειν, ουκ ελαττον ημερων τριακοντα, οθεν εξ επιπεδου καλως αναγνωσθησαι δυναται. Jud. Ant. Lib. xix. Cap. 5, 3.

The Saviour of the world commissioned his Apostles to go and preach the Gospel to all nations. This commission, perilous and impracticable as it might appear to human views, they faithfully executed, in spite of danger, labour, pain and persecution. They announced to all the Gentiles a new and celestial kingdom, in the privileges of which they might partake, without distinction, if they renounced their vices, abandoned the profane rites and execrable divinities to which they had hitherto been devoted, and worshipped the only true God, the Holy and Benevolent Creator of the universe. Against the efforts, which the Apostolic teachers made to destroy the Pagan religion, the following clause of the above edict seems to have been principally levelled: "Upon that people I enjoin to use with more moderation this my clemency, and not to bring into contempt the superstitions of other nations, but adhere to their own laws."

The supporters of Paganism, exasperated by an attempt, which, by exposing their fraud and mysteries, threatened to deprive them of the rewards of iniquity, opposed the preachers of the new faith with double violence, and sought in return to strip them and the nation to which they belonged, of the privileges which they had hitherto enjoyed in peace and security under the Roman government. This disposition in the defenders of the Gentile superstitions, directed indiscriminately against the Jews, it was the chief object of

* See some observations of Dr. Lardner upon this edict of Claudius, Vol. i. p. 179, 180. It seems to have escaped him, that it had any beneficial influence on the Jewish Christians and their cause.

this edict to repress. "I think it proper that the Jews under us, in all the world, should without opposition retain their paternal customs."

From this statement, if just, it follows that, while the Jews, without any regard to their difference of religious sentiments, were included in the Claudian edict, those among them, who supported the claims of Jesus, were principally concerned in, and mostly benefited by its operation.

But let us return again to the edict of Tiberius. We meet not only with allusions to it in the Apostolic writings, but also with one singular instance of the benefit it conferred upon the Christians and their cause. Instigated by his minister, the emperor molested the Jewish believers in the imperial city. This molestation served as a signal to those of their enemies, in distant parts, who had hitherto been restrained from persecuting them by the fear of punishment. Accordingly we thus read: "And at that time there was a great persecution of the Church, which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles." Acts. viii. 1.

The emperor however, finding the accusations of Sejanus to be the effects of ambition and malice, became, immediately after his execution, the friend of the people whom he had lately banished, and dispatched to all the governors of the provinces an edict in their behalf. We might, therefore, expect that the persecution, which thus broke out in all its fury, should suddenly be suspended, and that the infant church, which was thrown to the ground by the vio-

lence of the storm, should again appear augmenting its foundations, erecting its scattered pillars, and reflecting to our views the sunshine of tranquillity and peace. And we find our expectation realised by the following narrative. “ Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy spirit, were multiplied ” Acts ix. 31.

Philo assures us, Vol. ii. 546, that, in consequence of this edict and of other provisions which the emperor made to secure the public tranquillity, profound peace and happiness reigned in all parts of the empire. It followed therefore, that the churches in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria must have shared in the general felicity and harmony, and reaped, from the wise measures of the emperor, the advantages here stated by the sacred writer.*

* Dr. Lardner supposed (Vol. i. 97, 98.) that the Jews lost sight of their hatred towards the Christians, by the dark distress which was spread around them by Caligula, in attempting to put his statue in the temple of Jerusalem. And this he assigns as the cause of the repose which the churches enjoyed. The matter is examined, Vol. i. 166—171. In addition to what is said above and in the place referred to upon the subject, I will shew that the repose in question took place some years before the mad attempt of that Tyrant. The following is a passage in Acts xi. 27, 28. “ And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be a great famine through the whole habitable country: Which also came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.” Now, the assertion that the famine did *come to pass* in the days of Claudius, manifestly implies, that the prediction of it was *not* in his days, but in the days of his predecessor, i. e. in the last year of Caligula, the very year when occurred the event, to which Lardner ascribes the rest of the churches. Now if you carry your eye back from the coming of Agabus to Antioch, till you come

The edict of Tiberius, be it here by the way remarked, furnishes a criterion, by which we may ascertain the true date of the martyrdom of Stephen, of the conversion of Paul, and the repose of the churches. Philo, whose language is very emphatic, attests that Tiberius issued his edict immediately after the execution of Sejanus, which is assigned to the latter end of the seventeenth year of that emperor's reign. The above three events, therefore, which appear to have succeeded each other after short intervals must have happened, so early as the *thirty-third* of our Lord's age, that is, within four years after the commencement of his ministry. Hence it is demonstrable, that the period of his preaching did not continue as long as is generally supposed, but that it comes much nearer the time contended for by Dr. Priestley. See his *Greek Harmony*, p. 45. Hence too, most events in the history of the Apostles seem to have occurred, in proportion, more early than the periods to which they are referred by ec-

to the place where the cessation of persecution is related, Chap. ix. 31, the interval will appear to comprise six or seven years. For in the mean time the Apostle Peter *visits all quarters*, ix. 32; goes to Lydda, and stays there, till *all that dwelt in Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord*, 45. After this he *tarrys many days* in Joppa, 43, whence he returns to Jerusalem, and apparently makes some stay there before Agabus yet leaves that city. We may measure the above interval also by the history of the Apostle Paul. On the suspension of persecution he goes to Tarsus, establishes the Gospel in Cilicia and in Syria. He then returns to Antioch, and spends *a whole year* in that city, Chap. ix. 26, before Agabus comes down from Jerusalem. These movements according to Tillemont occupies a period of six years, See his *Eccl. His.* Vol. i. p. 165. If then, we take 6 from 40, which was the last of Caligula, and the year in which he attempted to erect his statue in the temple of Jerusalem, there remains 34 for the year in which the churches ceased to be persecuted: consequently the effect preceded the cause, which Lardner assigned, by six years.

clesiastical'chronologers.* This in particular is the case with respect to the Epistles of Paul, the latest of which seems to me, not to have exceeded the year 53. And, indeed, the allusions we meet with in these epistles to the impartial and equitable conduct of the civil rulers, imply that they were published when those rulers yet conformed to the edicts above noticed.

III. That the Jewish people molested in Rome, were the professors of the Gospel is a fact, which receives, in the third place, some corroboration from two passages of *Seneca* and *Dion Cassius*.

In epistle 108, the former writes. "The season of my youth had fallen in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar. At that time the rites of a foreign superstition became agitated: and amidst its subjects lay a controversy about abstaining from certain animals."†

* I cannot help illustrating this assertion by one instance. Claudius, it is well known, expelled the Jews and Christians from Rome. Orosius thinks that this event occurred in the ninth year of this emperor's reign. Some modern writers date it two or three years later. In this, however, they are not justified. Dion Cassius and Suetonius, who alone have recorded this matter, give it a much earlier date, the former actually referring it to the first year of Claudius. Let us then fix upon a middle period, and say that the event happened in the seventh year of that emperor. This was in the year 47 of our Lord. In the same year, or in the beginning of the next, then came to pass, an incident which Luke has thus recorded: "And (Paul) found a certain Jew named Aquila, *recently* come from Pontus (*προσφατως*, nuperrime, *very lately*), because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome." Acts xviii. 2. But the arrival of our Apostle in this place happened in 53 according to our ecclesiastical writers, that is, six years later than the event actually took place.

† In Tiberii Cæsaris principatum Juventæ tempus inciderat: alienigenarum sacra movebantur; sed inter argumenta superstitionis ponebatur quorundam animalium abstinentia.

Critics agree, that, by the foreign superstition of which Seneca here speaks, he intends the Jewish religion, and that the controversy about the use of animal food broke out at the time in which Tiberius banished the Jews from Italy. May it not then be fairly inferred, that it originated in the introduction of the Gospel into the metropolis; since we are assured on good authority (See Acts xv. 20. and p. 143 of this Analysis) that a dispute of this kind arose at Rome, and in every other place where it was first preached. Vol. i. p. 179—190.

The latter of the above mentioned authors has in his life of Claudius a passage to the following effect. “The Jews who a second time flocked to the city in such numbers, as rendered it difficult to exclude them without disturbance, the emperor did not indeed expel; but he commanded such of them as conformed in their conduct to their paternal law, not to assemble; and he dissolved the societies which returned under Caius.”*

The term *societies* (ἐταιρειαί) here used by this historian, denotes the assemblies of Jewish and Egyptian converts, in opposition to the other Jews above mentioned, whose conduct conformed to their paternal law. Of this position the following fact is a proof. The very same word is applied by Pliny, though a latin

* Τους δε Ιουδαιους, πλεονασαντας αυθις, ωσε χαλεπως αν ανευ ταραχης, υπο του οχλου σφων, της πολεως ειρχθηναι, ουκ εξηλασε μεν, τω δε δη πατριω νομω βιω χρωμενους εκελευσε μη συναθροιζεσθαι, τας τε εταιρειας επαναχθεισας υπο του Γαιου διελυσε. In Vita Claudii 6. The difference between this paragraph and the account given by Suetonius is reconciled in Vol. i. p. 203.

writer, to designate the societies of *Christians* ;* a circumstance which shews that it was not casually employed on a particular occasion, but chosen as the name, which had for some time been appropriated to the congregations of believers.

These societies are said to have returned, or, as the clause might be rendered, to have *restored themselves* under Caius. If then they returned under Caius (Caligula), they must have consisted partly of those Jews and Egyptians, who had been banished in the preceding, i. e. the reign of Tiberius. See Vol. i. p. 191—204.

IV. Some subjects of dispute connected with the expulsion of the Jews and Egyptians, afford additional proof of the position that they were the disciples of Jesus.

The Pagans, believing in the existence of an inferior race of Gods, called demons, which were said to appear sometimes in the shape of men, and at other times to enter into and dwell in human bodies, concluded, as soon as they became thoroughly convinced of his miracles and resurrection, that our Lord was one of those beings. This notion, which however absurd, was obviously dictated by the genius of paganism, even his enemies tenaciously embraced. They had recourse to it, we shall presently see, in order to undermine the sanctions of his religion ; and in opposition to it,

* Secundum mandata tua, writes he to Trajan, HETÆRIAS esse veteram. How this name was borrowed from the Egyptian assemblies and applied to the societies of Christians, is explained in Vol. i. p. 193—196.

I have already shewn, the Apostles strenuously maintained that the Christ, instead of being a demon residing in Jesus, was the man Jesus himself, whom God had endued with miraculous powers, and whom he raised from the dead. In illustration of this assertion accept the following instances. The philosopher Amelius, a disciple of Plotinus, and a friend of the bitterest enemy of our faith, declares in explicit terms, that our Lord was a divine being clothed in human flesh.* The historian Suetonius, who flourished soon after the days of the Apostles, gives him the name of a demon (Chrestus); and he evidently supposes him, though separated for many years from the person of Jesus, to be still in existence, instigating the Jews to tumult and rebellion. But the following instance, recorded by the evangelist Luke, is particularly worthy of our attention. When the Apostle Paul preached the resurrection of Jesus to the Athenian philosophers, some of them inferred that the preacher was the *setter forth of a strange God, or the publisher of a new demon.*† See Acts xvii. 18.

* See Vol. ii. p. 474, where his own words are quoted and explained.—The language of Suetonius is, *Judæos assidue tumultuantes impulsore Chresto, ex urbe expulit.* The obvious intimation of this passage that Christ was at this time in being, impelling the Jews to be incessantly tumultuous, has led some men to suppose that a different person is meant from our Saviour; and others, that the Roman historian had no knowledge of his having been long since put to death. Both suppositions are equally absurd and remote from the truth.

† See Vol. ii. p. 516—519, where this passage is explained. By the statement there given, my reader, if he will take the trouble to consult it, will perhaps find himself instructed.

Now let us suppose the report of our Lord's miracles, death, and resurrection, to be conveyed to the metropolis, and there become the subject of general credit. Whom might we expect that the learned and inquisitive of that city thought him to be? And in what manner may we suppose that they spoke of his death? From his miraculous endowments, and from his superiority to corruption, which was deemed the leading feature in the character of a God, they drew, it is natural to imagine, the same inference which the Athenian philosophers understood to be inculcated by the Apostle; namely, that he was a *strange god*, or a *new demon*. And the representation given of his death, we might farther conjecture, was that a great demon lately had expired in Judea. What we might thus expect to be dictated by the Pagan superstition, corresponds in the case of the wise men of Rome with the fact. Thaumasp an Egyptian pilot, Plutarch informs us, brought a report to Rome, that a demon, whom he called *the great Pan*, had lately died. "This report," continues the same author, "was propagated throughout Rome; so that Tiberius Cæsar sent for Thaumasp: and thus he gave credit to the report. In consequence of this, Tiberius made enquiries and sought information respecting this Pan. But the Philologers, who in great numbers surrounded him, conjectured that he was the son of Mercury and Penelope. And Philip had some witnesses present who had heard these things from the aged Æmilianus."*

* Οία δε πολλων ανθρωπων παροντων, ταχυ τον λογον εν Ρωμη σκεδασθηναι· και τον Θαυμασι γενεσθαι μεταπεμπτον υπο Τιβεριου Καισαρος· ουτω δε πισευσαι τω λογω τον Τιβεριον, ωσε διαπνυθανεσθαι και ζητειν περι του Πανος· εικαζειν δε τους φιλολογους συχνοιας οντας, τον

Now the coincidence of this story, which Thau-
 mas brought from the east, with the time and place of
 Christ's death, and especially its correspondence with
 the representation, which the genius of heathenism
 would give of a person sustaining the character, and
 dying in the circumstances of Jesus, render it, in my
 apprehension, impossible that the demon here intend-
 ed could be any other than the Saviour of the world,
 who about that time had suffered on the cross. But
 what must remove the doubt of every candid reader,
 is the consideration, that the rhetorician *Æmilianus*,
 from whom Philip received the story, is known to
 have been a convert to the new faith.* A Christian,
 speaking of a demon or god that had just expired, could
 mean no other than the founder of the Christian reli-
 gion.

This paragraph of Plutarch furnishes the reader with
 three very singular and very important particulars.
 We learn from it, first, that Tiberius believed the
 death of Jesus to be the death of some supernatural
 being. As he thought him to be a God, there can be
 no improbability in the fact, attested by Tertullian and
 other ecclesiastical writers, that he gave his suffrage
 for his deification by the Senate. We learn, secondly,

ἐξ Ἑρμού και Πηνελόπης γεγενημένον. Ὁ μὲν οὖν Φιλίππος εἶχε και
 τῶν παρόντων ἐνίους, Αἰμιλιανου του γεροντος ακηκοῦσας. Plut. De
 Defec. Orac. p. 419. The passage is quoted more at large, and trans-
 lated in Vol. i. p. 247—253.

* See Lardner, Vol. vii p. 461, in which place is quoted the para-
 graph, whence Warburton drew this just conclusion. The conversion
 of that rhetorician to the Christian religion, is probably the circum-
 stance intended when, in the first book of his *Metamorphosis*, Apuleius
 represents him as changed by magic into a ram.

that *the emperor made enquiries and sought information respecting him*. If so, it is surely natural to conclude, that he sought this information, among other sources, from an authority which was most competent to inform, and the least likely to deceive him. His Procurator, therefore, who was a spectator, and an actor in the tragedy of our Lord's death, must have been *solicited* to send the emperor an official account, if I may so say, of the actions and suffering of Jesus. And thus is also rendered probable an attestation of Justin Martyr, and of Tertullian,* *That in the Archives of the state lay deposited an authentic statement, sent by Pilate himself to the emperor, of the miracles and resurrection of the innocent person whom he had sentenced to die*. We are informed, thirdly, that the philologers, (i. e. the Egyptian, Chaldean, and Persian devotees of as-

* These two reputable writers, in the apologies which they respectively addressed to the Roman people, assert, with the fullest confidence, the existence of such documents sent by Pilate to the emperor. And it appears to me incredible, that they should in so confident and open a manner, refer the emperors, the Senate, and people of Rome to state-papers in their own possession, unless they were fully assured that such papers existed. Dr. Lardner, Vol. ii. p. 235, observes, "It was customary for governors of provinces to send to the emperor an account of remarkable transactions in the places where they presided. So thought the learned Eusebius, as we have seen. And Pliny's letters to Trajan, still extant, are a proof of it, Philo speaks of the acts or Memoirs of Alexandria, sent to Caligula, which the emperor read with more eagerness and satisfaction than any thing else." What was thus customary to be done by the governors of the provinces in ordinary cases, could not have been omitted by the governor of Judea, in a case so extraordinary as that of Jesus Christ. Besides, Pilate must have been very sensible, that the fame of his miracles, of his condemnation, and of his having risen from the dead, would soon reach the ear of the emperor; and that, if he neglected to conform to the usual practice, he should be summoned to do it by an imperial mandate.

trology and magic) who surrounded the emperor in great numbers, concurred with him in opinion that Jesus was a supernatural being, and represented him as being Pan the son of Mercury and Penelope. They called him *Pan*, (all) in allusion, perhaps to the universal empire, which the expected Messiah, it was supposed, would assume: while, under the description "Son of Mercury and Penelope," they inculcated his divine message to mankind, and the extraordinary virtues of his character; the former being deemed the Messenger of Jupiter, and the latter a rare example of chastity and purity.

The following is a paragraph translated from Tacitus. "Quintilianus brought before the Fathers a motion respecting a book of the Sibyl, which Caninius Gallus had demanded to be received among the other books of the same prophetess. After a division had been made upon the subject, Cæsar sent a letter, in which he reflected with moderation on the tribune, as being a youth unacquainted with the ancient custom. But he severely censured Gallus; because, a veteran in the study of ceremonies, he without adequate authority, and before he had taken the opinion of his Colleague, brought before a thin Senate a prophetic poem, which had not been, as was usual, read and examined by the chief priests, &c."

* Relatum inde ad Patres a Quintiliano tribuno plebei de libro Sibyllæ, quem Caninius Gallus recipi inter cæteros ejusdem vatis, et ea de re senatus consultum postulaverat: Quo per discessionem facto, misit litteras Cæsar, mœdice tribunum increpans, ignarum antiqui moris ob juventam: Gallo exprobrabat, quod scientiæ et cæremoniarum vetus, incerto auctore, ante sententiam collegii, non, ut assolct, lecto per mægistros æstimatoque carmine, apud infrequen-

The incident, which Tacitus has here recorded, is thus related by Dion Cassius: "And a certain oracle as if of the Sibyl, which did not indeed refer to the age of the city, but was sung at this time, greatly agitated the people: *After thrice three hundred years, civil war will destroy the Romans.* But Tiberius reprobated these verses of the Sibyl: and he examined all the books containing predictions, and some he rejected as of no value, but others of them he approved."*

Now, I propose by probable arguments to shew, that the predictions, which, if we follow the authority of the Roman historian,† Tiberius, after the death of

tem senatum egisset. Simul commonefecit, quia multa vana sub nomine celebri vulgabantur, sanxisse Augustum, quem intra diem ad prætorem urbanum deferrentur, neque habere privatim liceret: quod a majoribus quoque decretum erat post exustum sociali bello capitulum, &c. An. vi. 12.

* Λογιον τε τι ως και Σιβυλλειον, αλλως μεν ουδεν τω της πολωεω χρονω προσηκον, προς δε τα παροντα αδομενον, ουκ ήσυχη σφας εκι-
κει· ελεγε γαρ ότι,

Τρις δε τρηκοσιων περιτελλομενων ενιαυτων,
Ρωμαιαυς εμφυλος υλει σασις, α Συβαριτις αφροσυνη.

‘Ο ουν Τιβεριοσ ταυτα τε τα επη ως ψευδη οντα διεβαλε, και τα βιβ-
λια παντα τα μαντεια τινα εχοντα επεσκεψατο, και τα μεν ως ουδε-
νωσ αξια απεκρινε, τα δε ενεκρινε. In Vita Tiberii; Lib. lvii. 18.

† According to Tacitus this examination of the Sibylline book, occurred somewhat before the death of Tiberius. But Dion connects it with a prodigy, that foreboded the death of Germanicus many years earlier. But this is evidently an error, or what is more probable, a wilful misrepresentation. This historian, it is well known, often connects in the same detail occurrences which, in point of fact, were separated by long intervals. The following is a caution given the reader by an annotator. *Sæpe hoc oportet lectorem Dionis observare, junctim ab illo narrari, quæ minime eodem tempore nec eodem anno gesta sunt.*

Sejanus, examined and prohibited from being received among those of the Sibyl, were at least in part the forgeries of some Christian converts in Rome; and that the oracle specified by the Greek writer was either entirely forged, or if previously extant, *appropriated* by the same men, to corroborate an erroneous sentiment then prevalent among the Christians.

From Tacitus, it is manifest, that the emperor not only prevented the reception of the above oracles among those already ascribed to the Sibyl, but *prohibited* the use of them by private individuals. Now we find from a passage of Justin Martyr, that a prohibition was actually in force against the oracles forged by some of the primitive Christians, whether imputed to the Sibyl, to Hystaspes, or some of the Jewish prophets. The passage in part is as follows: "From an instigation of the demons death is pronounced against those who peruse the books of Hystaspes, or of the Sibyl, or of the prophets."* Now, if this writer un-

Vol. ii. p. 859. This remark is applicable to many cases that might be pointed out, as well as to the incident under consideration. If we examine the context, it will appear that the alarm, which the people of Rome felt on account of the above oracle must have been on an occasion different from that which was excited by the prodigies preceding the death of Germanicus, though the two events bear such resemblance to each other as to be associated in the memory, and from that association to succeed each other on the page. It is observable, farther, that Tacitus seems to have in his mind the very oracle which Dion mentions in giving the above account of the Sibylline book. Hence he speaks of the city being burned by civil war *sociali bello*, which is a translation of *εμφυλος σασις* in the Greek oracle; though it be certain, that the conflagration of the capitol, to which he alludes, was not occasioned by a civil war.

* The passage more at large, is as follows: *Opera autem malorum dæmonum mortis supplicium adversus librorum Hystaspis, aut Sibyllæ, aut Prophetarum lectores constitutum: ut per timorem homines abster-*

derstood that the forged prophecies, to which he alludes, had wholly, or in part, been brought before the Senate, and there condemned and prohibited by Tiberius himself, could he with any propriety produce any of them in an Apology, which he addressed to that assembly in subsequent times? This is not to be expected. Accordingly not a single verse is to be found in his greater Apology; while the Sibylline and other spurious verses are poured forth very abundantly in his *Exhortation to the Greeks*.

That the oracle, specified by Dion Cassius, was either forged by some Christian converts in Rome; or, if previously extant, *appropriated* by the same men, to corroborate an erroneous sentiment prevalent among the first Christians, is a fact which appears to be probable from the following consideration. Nero, it is well known, set fire to the city, charged the Christians as the authors, and exposed them, for their supposed guilt, to the most cruel tortures. This horrible act, which from its enormity would have been little credited, had it not come from a respectable adversary, is easily accounted for, on the supposition that the oracle in question was a Christian forgery. The first converts, in general, regarded Rome as the grand seat of that power of darkness, which opposed the kingdom of light; and believing that all such power would, in the end, be utterly destroyed, fondly concluded that the proud mistress of the world would undergo the fate, which the holy city so signally experienced.*

reant quo minus scripta ea legentes rerum bonarum notitiam percipiant; Sibi autem servos eos detineant; quod quidem ad effectum perducere nequiverunt. Apol. i. Cap. 59.

* This opinion is alluded to in the *Philopatris* of Lucian. The victorious arms of Trajan in the east furnished the wit of that writer with

This is the sentiment which the oracle under consideration inculcates: nor could Nero be ignorant that such a notion was cherished by perhaps the majority of the Christians in Rome, and that by some of them a prophecy, inculcating the conflagration of the capital, was forged and circulated under the high authority of the Sibyl. The tyrant naturally availed himself of these circumstances, as affording a fair opportunity of indulging in security the most unparalleled malice, cruelty, and revenge. The city he set on fire in various quarters, and pointed to the Christians as the perpetrators of the horrid deed. The accusation, he knew, would appear plausible, as their sentiments respecting its approaching conflagration were notorious. And what is very remarkable, we are assured, on the authority of Dion Cassius, that *he sung this very oracle on the occasion*, as though he held out to the enraged populace, that this was an act by which they endeavoured to fulfil their own prediction.†

a fair opportunity for exposing it to ridicule and contempt. A belief, that not only Rome, but the whole empire would be destroyed by the element of fire, was transmitted through many ages in the Christian Church. Lactantius with great elegance and animation describes the approaching dissolution, and refers to the books of the Sibyls and of Hystaspes as predicting the same event. *Sibyllæ tamen aperte interituram esse Romam loquuntur.—Hystaspes quoque admirabile somnium, sub interpretatione vaticinantis pueri ad memoriam posteris tradidit, sublatum iri ex orbe imperium nomenque Romanum.*" Lib. vii. Cap. 15. This charming writer refers, it is probable, among other predictions, to that oracle which Dion Cassius has recorded.

† In addition to the above proof that the oracle in question, if not fabricated, was in use among the first Christians, be it remarked, that it still exists, though somewhat changed, among those which under the name of the Sibyl, were produced in after days, as predictive of the destruction of Rome. In its present state it is as follows:

V. There remain lastly to be considered, in support of my proposition, one or two passages which occur in the writings of certain Jews.

Before I produce these, it is necessary to explain the circumstances which brought upon the Jewish nation the hatred of Sejanus. That wicked man, elated with the influence which he acquired over Tiberius, and the ascendancy which on that account he obtained in the Senate, became inspired with the vain hope of dethroning the emperor, and usurping the reins of government. As a step preparatory to his arriving at this elevation, he procured the erection of his statues in places of resort, and in temples, to which the idolatrous populace and the cringing nobles of Rome were invited to pay religious homage. And, in order to habituate the subjects of the empire to associate his name and character with the Supreme Power, he caused his image to wave, together with that of the emperor, in the front of the Roman legions. The Jews in Rome, apprehensive of his ambition, and cherishing a deep rooted aversion to every species of idolatry, instead of bowing in prostrate adulation before his images, spurned at them with contempt and indignation. And this is the circumstance which Philo appears to have in

Τρεις δε τρηκοσιους και τεσσαρακοντα και οκτω,
 Πληρωσεις λυκοβαντας, όταν σοι δυσμορος ήξη
 Μοιρα, βιαζομενη, τεον ονομα πληρωσασα, &c.
 Εσαι και Ρωμα ερημη. —————

Rome, in Greek, consists of letters which denote the number 948. To this Dion alludes, when he says of the above prediction, that it did not refer to the then age of the city. At the completion of that period, Rome it seems was to become *Rume*, meaning *desolated*.

view, when he says, *that the Jewish people in Italy opposed his IMPIOUS designs and measures.* The laudable opposition, of course, filled the vile conspirator with resentment ; and in order to be revenged, he had recourse to the arts of falsehood and misrepresentation. The crimes of which, says Josephus, four men only were guilty, he extended indiscriminately to the whole nation ; and stigmatised them as enemies to the person and government of Cæsar. Tiberius gave credit to his representations ; and the consequence was the expulsion of the Jews and Egyptians from Italy.

The scene however takes a sudden change. The views of the traitor are unfolded to the emperor ; and, at the moment he fancied himself ascending to the throne, he was hurled into the Tiber. The cruel and jealous mind of Tiberius was not to be satiated with the destruction of the conspirator. Every Senator, whom fear or interest had rendered obsequious to him, while yet a favourite, shared in his fate : and, since the friendship of Sejanus was a crime in all, excepting in the emperor himself, which could be expiated only with death, the aversion which the Jews shewed to his person, and the opposition they made to his measures, could not fail to restore them to the imperial favour. Accordingly the tyrant suddenly became the friend of the people, whom a little before he hated and persecuted ; and, in order to protect them from further violence, and to repair in some measure the injustice done them, he published an edict for their protection.

The Jews were the only people in Rome, who, while yet in the zenith of his power, had the courage to resist the measures of Sejanus ; and the resistance must

have reflected upon them the highest honour, and placed in an enviable light their independence and love of freedom. To deprive the Jewish people of the credit due to them in this respect, Tacitus, who was their bitterest enemy, and who, as Tertullian remarks, is loquacious of falsehoods beyond any other historian, refers the suppression of their rites and their banishment from Italy to a period in the reign of Tiberius, when his minister had no political existence. He connects the event with the death of Germanicus, which was in the eighteenth year of our Lord's age, and the third of the government of Tiberius. The cause, which induced the Roman historian to ascribe it to that particular time, is easily pointed out. *Whiston* has remarked, that Tacitus had carefully perused the works of Josephus, and that in his narrative of the Jews he has followed the authority of their great historian, excepting when his prejudices led him to sacrifice the faith of history to the fictions of Pagan malice. The remark appears to me unquestionably just; and the following circumstance is a corroboration of it. Josephus, having obliquely noticed the murder of Germanicus by Piso, successively relates the tumults which happened in Judea, between Pilate and the people, his testimony concerning Christ, the seduction of Paulina in Rome, and the expulsion of the Jews from Italy. And this is precisely the order in which Tacitus has narrated the same events. Having mentioned the death of Germanicus, and the honour paid to his memory, he adds (*An. Lib. ii. 84.*) that *in the same year* the Senate passed a decree, to restrain the impurities of certain women of quality, and to ex-

pel the Jews. The brief and transient manner, in which Josephus touches upon the affairs of the Romans, led him to pass over without noticing the long period of time, which intervened from the death of the above mentioned Prince to the commotions in Judea; nor was the exact date of a foreign incident, collaterally noticed, to be expected from a person who professedly wrote a history of the Jews. Tacitus, however, follows his footsteps, and avails himself of his authority as a mean to mislead his readers. Be it here remarked, that into an error, similar to what Tacitus has committed from design, Dion Cassius has fallen from carelessness or indifference; since he records in the first year of the reign of Claudius, an expulsion of the Jews, which undoubtedly happened many years later, and which some suppose to have taken place so late even as the twelfth year of that emperor. See Dion Cassius. Lib. lvii. 16.

In the tenth century flourished a Jew,* who assumed the name of Josephus, and imposed upon the world his own productions as the genuine works of the Jewish historian. The motives which prompted him to this bold and gross imposition, it is not difficult to discern. He well knew that the celebrated historian of the Jews, was in reality a historian of the Jewish Christians; that, under the paternal name of Judaism, he supported the infant religion of Jesus; that in his *Antiquities*, and in his answer to *Apion*, he takes a part in the dispute which, on the first diffusion of the new faith, broke out between the Jews and the Pagans;

* The age, character, and writings of this imposter are considered by Dr. Lardner in Vol. vii. p. 162—185.

that in *his Jewish Wars*, he gives a character of the first converts, in which he opposes his testimony to the various calumnies laid to their charge by their enemies; that he relates the destruction of Jerusalem, as the fulfilment of a prediction of that event, and exculpates Jesus and his followers from being the authors of that catastrophe, by tracing the causes of the war to their internal and external foes. See Vol. ii. of the *Development*, p. 101—107.

These things Josippon (for that was his name) well knew: and in consequence he published the original works of Josephus, modified conformably to his own sinister purposes, and stripped of the passages in favour of Christ and his cause, with others of a contrary complexion inserted in the room.* The following

* The statement, given above, of the object which Josippon had in view, will account for the following observation of Gagnier: "All Jewish writers, whether commentators, or historians, or philologers, continually alledge the work of Josippon, and quote authorities and testimonies from it, as an authentic and fundamental book.—As for the Greek Josephus, they have little regard for him, or rather none at all; but declaim against him as a lying historian, full of falsehoods and flatteries. But their Josippon they extol and magnify as true, and almost divine." Apud Lard. Vol. vii. p. 163. I will justify the truth of this remark by a paragraph taken from *Isaac Abrabaniel*, a Jewish commentator upon Daniel. "When Josephus writes, we do not receive his testimony, because he has many things misrepresented.—When he saw something unusual in the words of the prophets, he changed and perverted them: nor did he give honour to the words of the prophets, whereby he ought to praise God, and firmly *adhere to the truth*. But he despised the word of God: why then should we give credit to his words?" See the Epistle of *Christopher Arnold*, No. xiii. annexed to the second volume of Josephus' works, Haver. Edition. From this extract, it is evident, that the rabbins of former times considered Josephus as a convert to the Christian religion. For by *the truth* they under-

paragraph, which appears to have been substituted for the testimony borne to our Lord, is worthy of our attention. "In those days died the sacred Augustus Cæsar: And after him reigned Tiberius Cæsar. And Tiberius was a wicked and impious man. And he sent Pilate commander of the Army to Jerusalem, who brought there with his forces an image in the likeness of Tiberius Cæsar. And he demanded to bring in the image. The people rose up and prevented him from entering with it into the city; because, said the people to him, an image of man shall not come into the city of holiness. And Pilate, commander of the army, was highly incensed with the people of Judea. And many of the men of the city of Jerusalem he caused to perish by the sword: and many also of his own soldiers fell prostrate in dead bodies on the ground: because in the days of Tiberius Cæsar, were perpetrated many impious crimes, not in Judea only: even in Rome,

stood the Jewish religion in opposition to the Gospel. Thus the authors of the *Mishna* speak, when they allude to the Apostacy of their countrymen from Judaism. "The wisdom of the masters will be slighted, and all who will strive to avoid transgression will be contemned, and great will be the falling away from the truth—*Veritatis magnus erit defectus.*" On the contrary, the Christian writers meant the Christian in contradistinction to the Jewish religion. Thus Theodoret, nearly the end of his *commentaries* on the book of Daniel, attests that Josephus, though he did not proclaim his belief in Christ, was unable to conceal the truth—*την αληθειαν κρυπτειν ουκ ανεχομενος*. Chrysostom characterises him as a witness of the divine truth most deserving of credit, *αξιοχρεως μαρτυς της περι Θεου αληθειας*. Josephus published a comment upon the above mentioned prophet, and he pointed, it seems, to Jesus as the object in whom they were accomplished. To this publication the two commentators, Theodoret and Abrabaniel, probably refer, when they assert, the one, that Josephus was unable to conceal, the other, that he apostatized from the truth.

the city of royalty, many impious crimes were perpetrated."

Now the word (*nabaluth*) which I have rendered *impious crimes*, signifies properly *follies*; and hence it was sometimes used to denote the senseless and impure practices of idolatry and fornication, two names often synonymous in the Jewish writings, because of the impurities which always accompanied the Pagan rites. As the writer employs the term in connection with the effigy of Tiberius, it is clear that the crimes which he represents as perpetrated about this time in Judea, were of the latter kind. And we can easily discern what foundation he had for this charge. The people in general, in order to account for our Lord's miracles, supposed that he was inhabited by an angel: and even Thomas together with the other disciples, when they saw him risen from the dead, had at the time recourse to the supposition, that he was a superior being of this description. The Jewish heretics steadfastly adhered to the same hypothesis; and not only believed him to be a divine being, but, in imitation of the Pagans, who feasted in honour of their gods, celebrated his divinity by a solemn festival.* This practice, and the sensuali-

* The stupendous works which our Lord performed, disposed the majority of the Jews around him, to consider him as a superior being. The common people supposed he was one of the prophets risen from the dead; i. e. that he was animated by one of their souls, raised long since to the rank of an angel, by its separation from a corrupt and mortal body. Mark has recorded an incident (See Vol. ii. p. 461.) from which may be inferred that, in the opinion of some who were with him, while yet engaged in his ministry, a celestial spirit within the man Jesus, and not Jesus himself, constituted the Christ. Even the disciples had recourse to the same notion, when they first saw him risen from the dead, Vol. ii. p. 447—454. Of this general disposition to regard him

ties with which it was attended, constituted the impious crimes that Josippon had in view : and long before him, similar insinuations were thrown out by the authors of the *Mishna*, who speak of their synagogues as *turned into brothel houses*, the land of Judea as laid waste, and the wisdom of the rabbins held in contempt. Lard Vol. vii. p. 144.

But farther, the author asserts that crimes, similar to those in Judea, were perpetrated also in Rome. The assertion we have already seen, is not without some foundation. When the miracles and resurrection of Christ were believed, beyond doubt, in the imperial city, even the philologers around the person of the Prince inculcated that he was a demon or god descended from heaven ; and Tiberius himself proposed to consecrate him by an act of the Senate, as one of the tutelar divinities of the empire. From the subsequent analysis too we shall perceive, that multitudes in the Roman church regarded him in the same light, and that upon altars, erected by Pagan superstition, they offered incense to his praise.

In the above passage, moreover, it is insinuated that the attempt of Pilate to profane the holy city, by the introduction of images, originated in the impious crimes said to have been perpetrated in Judea and in Rome. This insinuation, I maintain, is founded in truth. The sycophants of power prompted Tiberius

as an angel, demon, or an inferior god, the Saviour was very sensible. In order therefore to correct so absurd and dangerous a notion, he usually designated himself by terms, which signify that he was one of the human race, that, though endowed with divine power and wisdom, he possessed only the nature and constitution of man. See Vol. ii. p. 34—

to assume divine honours in opposition to the deified Jesus. See Vol. i. p. 177. And though he had the good sense to decline the competition, it is not improbable that, at the instigation of Sejanus, he empowered Pilate to deposit within the walls of Jerusalem the effigies of himself and his favourite. The fact is attested by the true Josephus : and it is observable that, after briefly mentioning another tumult between Pilate and the people, he has inserted his testimony concerning Christ ; holding out, by that insertion, the close relation which subsisted between the illustrious subject of his attestation and the foregoing narrative—a relation, which, though well known to every reader in early times, has entirely been overlooked by modern critics.

In a tract of the *Talmud*, we meet with the following passage fabricated by rabbinical malice : “ When king Jannæus slew the rabbins, R. Joshua, son of Perachiah, and Jesus fled to Alexandria in Egypt—Therefore Jesus having left his master, devoted himself to the magical arts in Egypt. When he had acquired these arts, and hid them within his skin, he returned to Judea.”*

Here our Lord is represented as fleeing, when grown up to manhood, into Egypt, in company with his Preceptor Perachiah, meaning *John the Baptist*. See Vol. ii. p. 312. The cause of his flight was the anger of king Jannæus, who had put some of the rabbins to death. The origin of this fiction is now discernible.

* See Vol. ii. p. 311—319, where the passage is quoted more at large from Wagenseil’s *Refutation of Toldes Jeschu*, or Lard. Vol. vii. p. 149.

By Jannæus is intended *Sejanus*, who in the summit of his power governed the whole empire by his influence over Tiberius, and who caused many of the Jews to be destroyed, and the rest to be banished from Italy. This explanation must be true, because no other person, invested with regal authority, persecuted that people in the time of our Saviour. Besides, the similarity of the two names points directly to the minister of Tiberius.*

* The part which Pilate, as related in the four Gospels, took in the condemnation of our Lord, is ascribed in a Jewish Tract (*Toldos Jeschu*), containing a malicious account of his birth and his actions, to a *Queen*, said to be the wife of *Jannæus*. Pilate, like other officers of the state, must have been in a great degree under the influence of *Sejanus*, who perhaps was the mean of appointing him to the government of Judea. This circumstance may have given rise to the fiction, which represents him as the *wife of Jannæus*, i. e. as an old woman under the absolute controul of the minister who appointed him. I shall here produce a few passages from that Tract, as they corroborate an important conclusion already insisted upon, and reflect the fair features of truth, though delineated in the dark colours of falsehood. Pilate, though to pacify the Jews he abandoned the meek sufferer to crucifixion, yet pronounced him innocent, and wished him to be released as a person falsely accused. On his conduct, in this respect, is founded the following representation: "And the Queen turning to the wise men (meaning the chief priests who urged his death), said, how can ye presume to affirm that this man is an enchanter? Have I not seen him with my own eyes, performing miracles like a son of God? And the wise men answered and said, Let it not enter the mind of the Queen to utter such things: for most certainly he is an enchanter. But the Queen said to the wise men, Depart from my sight, nor ever again allege before me such accusations." Apud Wagen. p. 11.

From the following paragraph we may gather, that the governor, hearing of Jesus's resurrection and ascension, examined the matter, and gave credit to the representation of the disciples; that he maintained the truth of it before the chief priests, and demanded of them, if Jesus was not actually risen, to go and find out the body. "About the

* The persons in Rome, who fabricated the Gnostic system, as we shall presently see, were principally natives of Egypt, and, like all the Egyptian philologers, devoted to the arts of magic. On the expulsion of the Jews and Egyptians from Italy, some of these magicians, it is natural to suppose, retired to Alexandria. Of these favourable circumstances the rabbins

middle of the night the disciples came to the sepulchre, and there sitting down bitterly wept over him. Judas, seeing these things, conveyed away the body and hid it in his own garden. On the following day, the disciples again came to the sepulchre, and as they were weeping, Judas said to them, Why do ye weep? Search and see the buried man. And when they examined and found him not, the impious band exclaimed, He is not in the sepulchre, but is ascended to heaven: for this, while he was yet alive, he foretold of himself, and interpreted as if declared of himself this saying, *Since he will receive me Selah.* Of these things the Queen is informed; and she summons before her the wise men of Israel, and says to them, What have you done to that man, whom you asserted to be an enchanter and a seducer of the people? They answered, we have buried him conformably to our law. Then commands she, bring the body here before me. They depart, and seek it in the sepulchre, but could not find it. They again return to the Queen, and say, we know not who hath stolen him from the sepulchre. The Queen answering, says, He is a son of God, and hath ascended to his father in heaven. The wise men reply, Admit not such thoughts into your mind, he was truly a magician: and the wise men gave proof to their testimonies that he was the natural son of an unclean woman. Then rejoined the Queen, why should I thus trifle with you. Bring the body here before me, and I will pronounce you innocent; but if not, none of you shall be left unpunished. They all answer in these words, Give us time, that we may know the event of this business. And she allows them the space of *three days*: and the wise and godly men departed from the Queen, mourning with a sorrowful heart, and ignorant what could be done." In the mean time Judas discovers to them the body concealed in his garden. "Then assemble together the wise men of Israel, and the body, fastened to the tail of a horse, they dragged before the Queen: and they say, Behold the man, of whom thou hast affirmed, that he has ascended to heaven. And

availed themselves, as affording a specious way of accounting for miracles, the reality of which none in those ages dared to deny. For one of the fugitive devotees who pretended to teach his religion, they substituted the holy founder ; and they would lead the reader to conclude, that the benevolent Jesus was of the same class with Cerinthus and Simon Magus, who, having studied the science of magic in Egypt, returned to their own country, and there reduced it to practice. How general must have been the belief, how irresistible the evidence of the mighty works ascribed to our Lord, that his enemies, in order to explain them away, were compelled to fabricate a fiction so inadequate, a falsehood so flagrant and notorious.

I have now finished the evidences, which I had to when the Queen saw him, she was suffused with shame, and knew not what to reply, p. 19. 20.

The folly and malice of this representation is sufficiently apparent. Nevertheless, the momentous facts, related at the close of the evangelical records, are in it clearly recognised ; and they hence receive the unwilling testimony of malignant enemies. If the truth of them had not been too notorious and too well attested to be contradicted with effect, the fabricators, who had every information upon the subject, would never have had recourse to such a fiction, in order to undermine them. From the above extracts, it appears manifest, that Pilate had instituted a strict enquiry into the fact of our Lord's resurrection ; that he became hence satisfied of its truth ; that he maintained it in opposition to the chief priests, and that the testimony which he had borne to it covered them with grief and confusion. This view of the governor's conduct not only accords with the fact attested by Justin and Tertullian, that Pilate sent to his sovereign an account of the miracles and resurrection of Jesus ; but implies the truth of their attestation. Perceiving that he was risen and ascended into heaven ; Pilate, it seems, concluded that he was *a son of God* ; meaning, according to the interpretation of a heathen, that he was a *divine being*. Tiberius, having received indubitable assurance of that event, drew from it, we have seen, a similar conclusion.

produce in support of the proposition that the Jews, of whose banishment the above historians give an account, were chiefly converts to the Christian religion. These evidences, it is hoped, are upon the whole satisfactory, but if any doubt remain upon the subject, the following Analysis will remove it. I proceed to the inferences which may be drawn from the above enquiry.

First, Josephus, who asserts the innocence of the sufferers in general, and ascribes their hardships to the wickedness of four leading men; and also Philo, who not only defends them from the accusations of Sejanus, but passes a high encomium upon their character, are, in this instance proved to be CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS. And this prepares us to regard them as performing the same honourable office, which most assuredly they do perform, in other parts of their immortal writings.

Secondly, Josephus being a Christian, and a Christian too in the latter part of his life, by no means disguised, can no longer be denied to have been the author of the paragraph respecting JESUS CHRIST in his *Antiquities*. The place of its insertion, which critics from superficial views have urged as betraying the spuriousness, now manifestly proclaims the authenticity of the passage. The author well knew that the disturbance in Rome was owing to the introduction of the new faith, and to the wickedness of four men that pretended to teach it. To the narrative of this, he wisely prefixed a concise, but just and comprehensive, description of the illustrious founder; manifesting thereby to his readers, generally disposed to consider

him as a devotee of magic, that Jesus sustained a character very opposite to those magicians, who, though pretending to be teachers of his religion, were yet wicked in every respect.

Thirdly, It is hence proved beyond contradiction, that Christian societies existed in Rome soon after the resurrection of Jesus. Of the manner in which those societies were formed, a statement is given by the writer of the *Clementine Homilies*; and the preceding investigation implies that that statement is correct and true. A rumour was introduced into the city, that a man in Judea was delegated to reveal the Will of God; and that in support of his delegation he had received power to heal all manner of diseases among the people. This rumour prevailed more and more, till by the concurrent testimonies of persons coming from that country, and by official documents which the governor himself, after the resurrection of the innocent sufferer, had sent to the emperor, it was established into a real fact. The Jews in the metropolis, regarding the prophet of Nazareth, not with the prejudiced eyes of his countrymen, who dishonoured him on account of his mean appearance, but with the admiration due to a Divine Messenger so distinguished for power, wisdom, and benevolence, submitted in general to his claims as the expected Messiah. But it must not be forgotten that, being yet uninstructed by the Apostles in the nature and object of the Christian doctrine, they continued to retain, with fond hope and tenacious confidence, those ideas of it which Jewish prejudices had taught them to entertain. And hence the first church of Christians, in the capital of the empire, differed little from a synagogue of Jews.

Fourthly, The Jew and his three associates, whom Josephus stigmatises as wicked in every respect, were pretended teachers of the Gospel, which our historian, and even our Lord and his Apostles, considered as the philosophy of the religion of Moses, brought fully to light, removed from its corruptions, and purified from its grosser parts. And we shall presently see those men addressed, under this character, by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who exposes their false pretensions, and holds them up to the converts in Rome, as enemies of the Gospel which they affected to preach. Their sentiments and vices will, in truth, appear to comprehend the chief circumstances, which called forth the Epistle addressed to the Roman church.

All the early Christian writers agree that the person, who first corrupted the Christian Doctrine, was Simon Magus, whose age and character are ascertained in the Acts of the Apostles, Chap. viii. In the Homilies ascribed to Clement of Rome, he is said to have been a disciple of John the Baptist (see Vol. ii. p. 292, where the passage is quoted); and this assertion throws much light upon some parts of the four Gospels. During the life time of our Lord, he practised magic in Alexandria, where he taught, among other disciples, *Cerintus*, a Jew; whom, a though pretended convert, the beloved disciple stiled the first born of Satan. From thence, we have some reason to believe (Vol. ii. p. 246—250.) Simon withdrew to Rome, accompanied perhaps by that disciple; and it appears to me not improbable, that this last is the very Jew whom Josephus reprobates as the chief author of the disturbance in that city. This supposition accounts for a fact, which will appear cer-

tain from the Analysis ; namely, that the Jewish heretics, whom Paul opposes in the Roman church, were *Cerinthians*. It discloses, too, the reason which induced the Jewish historian to subjoin to his narrative of the tumult in Rome, a paragraph respecting the Samaritan impostor. That this last had some connection with the persecution which broke out in the metropolis, may also be inferred from the writer of the Acts, who has led his readers to associate that persecution with the name of Simon Magus.

The three persons connected with the wicked Jew in teaching the new faith, were the priests of Isis, whom Josephus stigmatises as concerned in the seduction of Paulina. The Egyptian and other philologers, whom the emperor consulted respecting Christ, and who pronounced him to be Pan, the son of Mercury and Penelope, must have been in name not only converts to the Christian doctrine, but teachers of it. The pretended conversion of the Egyptian priests accounts for the conversion of the Egyptians, and for their being expelled from Italy in conjunction with the Jewish believers. Those impostors of course imported the Egyptian superstition, with its impure rites, into the Church of Christ : and hence we may expect, that that superstition and its attendant impurities should be noticed by our Apostle in his Epistle to the Romans.

Simon and his followers in contradistinction to the Catholic believers, whose meekness of wisdom precluded the boast of superior knowledge, arrogated the proud name of Gnostics. Of the opinions, which they incorporated with the Christian religion, a well attested account is given by many of the fathers. These

opinions are specified in Vol. ii. p. 250—270, and they will be detailed as occasion calls for them in the sequel.

The first Gnostics were in reality Jewish and Gentile *Epicureans*.* They accordingly denied the existence of a God, of a providence, and of a future state. They maintained that there existed no foundation, in the nature and circumstances of man, for any distinction between virtue and vice. Entertaining these profane and pernicious sentiments, they abandoned themselves to the pursuit of pleasure, however gross, as the only rule of conduct, and to the attainment of it, as the true end of life.

These profligate and incorrigible men, observing the tendency of the new faith, to reform and enlighten mankind, and thus to preclude the gains of dishonesty; perceiving too, that an open resistance, however vio-

* The real sentiments of Simon and his associates are stated in the *Recognitions* ascribed to Clement of Rome. In the dispute which he is represented as holding with *Peter*, he openly maintains that the soul dies with the body, and that the body remains dead for ever. Lib. iii. 41. These tenets the impostors disguised, when they affected to teach the Christian religion. See Vol. ii. 255, 256. The circumstance of the first Gnostic teachers being really Epicureans, furnished the adversaries of the Gospel with an opportunity for stigmatizing the followers of Jesus Christ, as though they were the followers of Epicurus. Lucian, Plutarch, and Maximus Tyrius have been guilty of this insidious misrepresentation. See Vol. ii. 271—282. The rabbins had recourse to the same artifice. R. Lipmannus, who flourished about the end of the fourteenth century, opens his *Carmen Memoriale*, in the following manner. *Ecquid respondebo Epicureo, (i. e. Christiano) qui adventat ad perendum et destruendum legem sacrosanctam fidelium, atque Dei unitatem cum superbiloquentia impugnat? Wagen. Ignea Tela Satanæ. p. 107.*

lent, was ineffectual to restrain its progress, planned a subtle system, which under the appearance of friendship for the illustrious founder, was calculated first to corrupt the truth, and then to counteract the efficacy of his religion. Their first object was to destroy the fundamental belief of a Supreme Creator, and of an overruling Providence. In order to answer this end, they trod in the footsteps of Epicurus. Instead of openly maintaining that the works of nature have no intelligent author, they represented this author, in opposition to the Apostles, as an inferior divinity, evil in his nature, malevolent in his temper, delighting in the misery not in the happiness of his creatures, and binding them to the obedience of unnecessary and arbitrary laws. Above the creator they represented a being of supreme power, wisdom, and goodness, who led a life of impenetrable and indolent security, unconcerned for human affairs, and known to none but themselves. To this *unknown God*, held forth by the deceivers, Paul opposes the Benevolent Father of the Universe; and we shall perceive that to the malicious representations, which they gave of him, we are indebted for the many beautiful and amiable descriptions of the Divine Character and Benignity, with which the Apostolic epistles abound.

The true gospel declares that its founder is *the son of God*, and that the object of his mission was under the divine wisdom to reveal, and under the divine power to accomplish, a Plan which might rescue mankind from sin and death, and raise them to everlasting glory and felicity. In opposition to this, the deceivers taught that Christ was not the son of the Creator, but a God *superior* to him; and that the end of his mission was not

to co-operate with the designs of the Creator, but to destroy his works, and to deliver the human race from the bondage of his arbitrary laws. See Vol. ii. p. 391, 418. Iren. p. 95. Theod. Hær. Fab. Lib. i. 2.

The impostors, having proceeded thus far, contrived, in the next place, means to undermine the great doctrine of a future state and of a righteous retribution, which the gospel brought to light; and which, they perceived, proved a divinely efficacious power in reforming the vices of men. In order to answer this end, they had recourse to methods which differed according to their different views and situations. The *Gentile* Gnostics inculcated that salvation was to be attained not by *good works*, but by *grace*. This was the doctrine of the heresiarch Simon, who, as Theodoret informs us, taught that the prophets were the ministers of (evil) angels. "Therefore he encouraged those, who believed in him, not to attend to them, nor dread the threatenings of the laws, but to practise without restraint whatever they wished. For it is not *by good works*, but *by grace* they can attain salvation." In consequence of this encouragement, his followers, adds the same author, abandoned themselves to the most abominable indulgences.* On the other hand, the *Jewish* Gnostics adhered to those rites and ceremonies

* Τους δε προφητας των αγγελων ὑπουργους γεγενησθαι. τους δε εις αυτον πιστευοντας εκελευσε μη προσεχειν εκεινοις, μηδε φριττειν των νομων τας απειλας, αλλα πραττειν ὡς ελευθερους ἄπερ αν εθελησωσιν. ου γαρ δια πραξεων αγαθων αλλα δια χαριτος τευξισθαι της σωτηριας· ου δε χαριν οι της τουτου συμμοριας πασαν ετολμων ασελγίαν, και μαγγανιαις εχρωντο παντοδαπαις, ερωτικα τινα και αγωγιμα μηχανωμενοι, και τα αλλα ὅσα της γοητειας ιδια ὡς θεια μετιοντις μυσηρια. Hær. Fab. Lib. i. 1.

in habits of predilection for which they had been educated, and which they dignified with the title *works of the law*, and not to an efficacious belief in the divine mission of Jesus, as the ground of acceptance with God; while the Gentile and the Jewish concurred in representing such a belief as ill founded.

By the *works of the law*, then, which the Apostle Paul so often mentions, we are to understand, not as is generally supposed, *virtuous actions* or *moral duties*, but those *ceremonial performances*, or *ritual observances*, upon which certain Jewish zealots from the school of the Pharisees insisted, as the medium of salvation, in opposition to an influential belief, called *faith*, in a future life, confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus. This distinction is of great importance to be attended to; and the intelligent reader will doubtless be glad to see it justified by adequate proofs.

1. That what the Judaizing teachers of the Gospel called *the works of the law*, or *the righteousness of the law*, and what the Apostle Paul in conformity to them so calls, meant merely rites and ceremonies, and not the works of morality, is manifest, first, because those very men, while they boasted in their privileges and practices as Jews, denied the obligations of virtue, resisted the necessity of repentance and reformation, reduced immorality into a system, and even gloried in the commission of the most criminal deeds. The following passage, in which Theodoret speaks of the *Carpocratians*, answers precisely to the followers of *Cerintus* and *Nicolaus*; "These men use magic, and employ the names of demons: and to such a pitch of

madness are they advanced, that they conceal not their lewdness, but reduce it to a regular system. For, says Carpocrates, some things are deemed evil, and others good, from opinion, and not from truth. While I am on this subject, I shall not pass in silence over the legislative sanctions which they give to their impurities. They admit the transmigrations (of the soul), but not upon the principle on which it was taught by Pythagoras. For he said, that souls which have sinned are sent into bodies to be duly punished and purified. But these say, that the cause of their being embodied is directly opposite to that assigned by Pythagoras. For human souls, affirm they, are sent into bodies, in order to practise all manner of impurities; that, therefore, those souls, which fulfil this end, on being once immersed in a body, do not need a second immersion; but that those, which have sinned in a small degree, must be sent twice, thrice, or oftentimes, until they have completed all sorts of baseness." Hær. Fab. Lib. i. 5. Improbable and shocking as is this representation, it is justified by what the Apostles themselves have indirectly said of the Judaizing teachers. The very men, who pleaded *the works of the law* in their justification with God, Paul holds forth in his Epistle to the Romans, as guilty of stealing, adultery and sacrilege. Consult the following passages, and you will see the evil practices, to which they were devoted, more fully enumerated. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. 1 Tim. i. 10. Tit. i. 10—15. The Apostles Peter, Jude and John have drawn their character in colours equally black and odious. Is it then to be supposed that men, who in principle confounded the distinctions of virtue and vice, and in practice aban-

doned themselves, without compunction and without restraint, to every species of immorality ; and who, as the Apostle Paul writes of them, *gloried in their shame*, i. e. boasted in those evil deeds, which ought to have covered them with confusion and remorse—is it to be supposed, that persons of this description, when they preached the works of the law, meant by that phrase, *the moral virtues* ? The supposition is inadmissible and even absurd. By the works of the law, therefore, in which they boasted, must be understood the rites and ceremonies of the law, of which they were tenacious, and which their vices disposed them to substitute for the exercise of true piety, benevolence, and temperance.

2. That the works of the law signified merely the rites of the law, may also be gathered from the following consideration. The Apostle Paul, in opposition to those impostors, who preached the works of the law as the way to be saved, sometimes specifies the rite of circumcision as the leading article of those works ; and hence shews from the context, that the dispute between him and his adversaries turned upon some institutions peculiar to the law of Moses, and not upon the general principles of virtue. See Rom. iv. 1—9. Gal. iii. 9—17.

3. The question, which was agitated between the Pharisaical teachers of the gospel and the Apostles, as related in Acts xv. 1—12, farther demonstrates, that by the works of the law was intended simply the performance of those rites which were comprehended in the Levitical Code. The former insisted against the latter, that the Gentiles, in order to be saved, ought to

submit to the ceremony of circumcision; and of this submission, and not of moral virtue, they speak as being the mean of *keeping the law*, ver. 5.

4. The term, which the Apostle Paul opposes to the phrase *works of the law*, serves, moreover, to ascertain its precise signification. In the controversy which he had with the Zealots respecting the salvation of the Gentiles, he maintained that they are to be saved not *by works*, but *by favour*, that is, by the favour of a kind exemption from *burdensome ceremonies*. For this reason, the *evil doers*, whose doctrine the Apostles controverted, were sometimes stiled *πεπισευκοτες δις των εργαων νομου* *believers through the works of the law*; while in contradistinction to them, the catholic converts are described as *πεπισευκοτες δια της χαριτος* *believers through the favour*. See Vol. ii. p. 505, 522. See also Rom. xi. 6.

5. In the last place, from one particular passage in the writings of Paul, we may perceive with the utmost clearness and certainty the true nature of those works, in which the false brethren made their own righteousness to consist, and which they pleaded as the ground of their confidence with God. In his letter to the Philippians he thus writes: "Beware of those dogs; beware of their wicked practices; beware of their biting you. For we are the true circumcision, who pay a religious service to God in the mind, and boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though indeed I have room for confidence in the flesh: for, if any one may presume to have confidence in the flesh, I still more: I was circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel,

of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew from Hebrews ; with respect to the law, a Pharisee ; with respect to my zeal, a persecutor of the Church ; according to the righteousness of the law, blameless. But these things which were gain, I count but loss in respect to Christ. Nay indeed I count all things but loss, in respect of the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Phil. iii. 2—9. Here we see enumerated those privileges in which the deceivers confided, and on which they founded their hope of salvation. From the possession of them they held themselves righteous in the eye of the law ; while *in a moral view* they resembled dogs, which were prompted by fury to bite men, and by hunger to devour the grossest filth. See 2 Peter ii. 22. Rev. xxii. 15.

In opposition to those rites which, under the pompous title "works of the law," the Jews performed, and to the supposed privileges which they possessed above other nations, the Apostolic teachers inculcated, as the medium of Salvation, the principle of *faith* in Jesus ; meaning by the term, not the inefficacious belief of any set of doctrines, much less the belief of those creeds, which the wickedness of men hath blended with the word of God, but *the exercise of refined piety and benevolence, arising from a firm belief in a future state, illustrated and confirmed by the resurrection of Christ.* The truth of this assertion is attested by various passages that might be produced ; and, indeed the uniform tenor of the Apostolic writings confirms and illustrates it. It may be useful, before we proceed to the examination of those writings, to establish the justice of the above distinction, by noticing a few of the more striking passages in the New Testament, which de-

monstrate that a *virtuous conduct* and a *holy life* constitute the only foundation, on which we can erect the hope of divine pardon and acceptance.

1. The Saviour, foreseeing that certain men, pretending to be his followers, would discard the obligations of virtue, and insist on external rites, superior knowledge, distinguished privileges, certain spiritual seed implanted in them, or some secret bias of nature in their behalf, inculcated with a wisdom worthy of the teacher of divine truth, and of the messenger of heaven, that his disciples are known only by the fruits of righteousness, Mat. vii. 15; that the works, which men now perform, constitute the standard by which they shall hereafter be judged, Mat. xvi. 27; that none will be acknowledged as his brethren, but such as *do*, (and not merely *profess*), the will of his Heavenly Father, Mat. xii. 50; that the exercise of the social principle in the various relations of life, to the exclusion of all other claims, will entitle the professors of his Gospel to the approbation of their final judge, Mat. xxv. 34—46; that God is then only glorified when they bring forth good fruit; and then only will their Divine Master reward them as his disciples, when they are distinguished by brotherly love. See Vol. ii. p. 7, 57, 58, 409, 410, 543, 544.

2. To the ritual observances, insisted upon by the Pharisaical teachers, the Apostles opposed *faith* in Jesus: and this faith, they at the time explained to mean a rule of conduct, a principle in the hand of God that reformed the manners, and purified the heart, Acts xv. 9. And it is worthy of observation, that the faith, which they urged in opposition to what the

Zealots stiled the works of the law, is, in the Apostolic decree sent to the churches, described solely by its *effects*; and represented as consisting altogether in abstaining from Pagan impurities, and in keeping the golden rule of doing to others what, in a change of circumstances, they wished others should do to them. ver. 29.

3. Paul, admonishing the Philippians to be on their guard against the false pretensions of their deceivers, holds forth, in opposition to the righteousness of the law which they pleaded, the *righteousness which is by faith in Christ, and the power of his resurrection*, Phil. iii. 9. and of this power and this righteousness, he presently subjoins the following beautiful delineation: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are venerable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, reason on these things: the things, which ye learned, and received and heard, and saw in me, practise those things.” iv. 8—9. As though he had said: “Meditate and dispute not upon *Jewish tales; and commandments of men who have turned from the truth*, Tit. i. 14; nor upon *fables which afford disputations rather than improvement in godliness*, 1 Tim. i. 5, but upon such things, as I here describe to you; and imitate those virtues which you have witnessed in my behaviour, and not those vices which are exhibited in the character of your deceivers.”

4. If, from the law of association of ideas, as explained by those immortal sons of science and virtue,

Hartley and Priestley, we analyse certain phrases, which occur in the epistles, the authors will appear to have been in the habit of inculcating *good works*, in contradistinction to the pretensions of the Zealots, as the primary end which the Gospel had in view, and as the only way of recommending men to the friendship of their Maker. An instance illustrative of my meaning is contained in the following passage. "The favour (the Gospel) of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared unto us; teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live chastely, and righteously, and piously in this present world; gladly entertaining the happy expectation of the glorious appearance of the Great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, to deliver us from iniquity, and to purify for himself a peculiar people, zealous (not of some fancied privileges, or of certain rites) *of good works*. Tit. ii. 11—15.

5. The Apostolic teachers, though they lay great stress on faith, yet represent it as subordinate to *benevolence*. From its tendency and efficacy to promote charity it derives, according to them, its whole value. They assured their brethren, that if a firm belief in the Gospel had not its due effect on their temper and conduct, it will eventually prove of no avail to them. They go even so far as to speak of that very faith, which they preached, in terms of degradation, and almost of contempt, when it became considered by some as having any value in itself, or detached from the cultivation of superior virtue. See 1 Cor. xiii. Jam. ii. 17—26

6. Finally, the Apostle Paul declares in solemn, repeated and unequivocal language, that the works

which men perform, and not the principles they affect to believe, or the privileges in which they pride, form the standard, by which they shall be tried in the great day of final retribution. See in particular Rom. ii. 1—12. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 John iii. 7.

It has been asserted above, that the Jewish and Gentile Gnostics concurred in representing the hope of a new life, taught by the founder and the first preachers of Christianity, as ill founded. They held forth, I mean, a principle calculated to undermine that hope : and this principle they made the basis of the Gospel which they opposed to the Apostolic Gospel.

The Gospel of the impostors the Apostle Paul thus notices in express terms : “ I wonder,” writes he to the Galatians, “ that ye have so soon transferred yourselves from Christ who called you with favour, to ANOTHER GOSPEL ; which indeed is no Gospel, but (the fiction) of men who throw you into confusion, (οἱ παρασσωτες ὑμας, see Vol. ii. p. 509), and wish to subvert the Gospel of Christ.” i. 6, 7. Here the venerable author declares in unequivocal language, that the deceivers inculcated, under the name of the Gospel of Christ, a fiction, of which the object was to undermine it. The fundamental articles, contained in their pretended Gospel, were the following, that Christ did not actually submit to death ; that the design of his mission was not to deliver men *from sin* ; that he was not the son of the Creator of the world ; that he acted not in unison with his Will ; and that the glory was due to a Supreme God which they affected to reveal. Against these impudent notions the several clauses of the verse, preceding the above, are levelled : “ Favour

be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself (to die) on account of our sins, that he might (by revealing the future rewards of virtue) deliver us from the wickedness of the present world, according to the will of God and our Father : To him be the glory for ever and ever.”

The impostors, being Epicureans, maintained that the soul, as it was not a principle distinct from the body, perished with it on its dissolution by death. Hence they concluded that there could be no life to come, in which virtue should be rewarded and vice punished. The conclusion, however plausible, the Apostolic teachers obviated, by erecting the hope of a future state, not, as had hitherto been usually done, upon the supposed immortal nature of the human soul, but upon the future resurrection of the dead, proclaimed by the founder of their religion, and illustrated by his own resurrection. This animating assurance, expressed in clear terms, and established, not upon opinion, but upon a matter of fact, the anti-apostolic teachers endeavoured to subvert by the following argument : “ The Christ, who appeared risen from the dead, was a divine, immortal being :* his resurrection therefore,

* Sometimes they maintained that Christ was a God dwelling in the man Jesus, See Vol. ii. p. 260—264, 465, 466, 473, 474, 496, 497. While they affected to embrace the former, the latter they at the same time cursed, blasphemed, or excommunicated. To this fact Paul has the following pointed allusion, “ No man speaking by the spirit of God calleth *Jesus accursed*.” 1 Cor. xii. 2. To this he also refers, when at the close of the letter he writes : “ If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema (excommunicated).” As though he had said : “ If any one among you pretend to embrace the Christ as a divine being resident in Jesus, and yet excommunicate Jesus himself, let *that person*, and not *Jesus*, be excommunicated.” On the same subject John has recorded these remarkable words : “ Who is the liar, but he

can be no solid pledge of the resurrection of beings, such as men are, wrought of materials that are corruptible and subject by nature to the stroke of death." From this statement it appears, then; that the doctrine of the Messiah's divinity, which the advocates of the trinitarian faith urge as essential to the Christian religion, constitutes the very article which the bit-

that denieth Jesus to be the Christ? this is the antichrist, who denieth the Father and the son," i. e. denieth the Father to be Benevolent and Supreme, and Christ to be the son of the Universal Father, 1 Epis. ii. 22.

At other times, the impostors taught that Christ personated the man Jesus, and that he was a God in the mere form, without the substance of a human being, Vol. ii. 267. Those, who held this opinion, are thus stigmatised by the Apostle John: "Many false teachers are come into the world. By this we know the spirit of God: every spirit which alloweth that Jesus Christ came IN THE FLESH, (i. e. had a real human body) is of God: but every spirit which alloweth not that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, of whose coming ye have heard." 1 Epis. iv. 1—4. Agreeably to the following Epicurean maxim, *Tangi, nisi corpus, nulla patet res*, they maintained that our Lord when he rose from the dead, as being without a real body, was incapable of being *touched* or *handled*. To this notion the same Apostle plainly alludes in the beginning of this epistle: "That, which was in the beginning, WHICH WE HAVE HEARD, which we have beholden with our eyes, which we have inspected, AND OUR HANDS HAVE HANDLED—that, concerning the Logos of life declare we unto you."

Because they taught that Christ was a man in *appearance*, and not in *reality*, and therefore, like a spectre or phantom, could be an object of sight only, they were called Ὁι Δοκουντες or Δοκηται: *Docetæ*, or, as the term might be rendered in our language, *Seemers*. This appropriate term was first given them by the Apostle Paul, as we may learn from the following passage: "I went up to Jerusalem by revelation; and gave to them (i. e. to the Christian Society at large) a general account of the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, BUT TO THE SEEMERS TOIΣ ΔΟΚΟΥΣΙ AN EXACT AND MINUTE DETAIL OF IT, to shew them that I run not, nor have run (ΕΙΣ ΚΕΝΟΝ at a vain thing) at a PHANTOM." Gal. ii. 2.

terest enemies of it used, in opposition to Christ and his Apostles, for undermining the hope of a future state and rendering ineffectual the motives, hence afforded, to the eradication of vice and the practice of virtue. The method, to which the Apostles had recourse for exposing the above subterfuge of the deceivers, is a matter of supreme importance to the Christian Cause, and well deserves the attention of every rational enquirer. They insisted, against their false brethren, *that Jesus is the Christ*; meaning, that the man Jesus, and not a divinity within him, was the Saviour whom they preached. This the Apostle Paul declares, on one occasion, to be the foundation of the true Gospel; and the doctrines which the impostors erected upon his supposed divinity, he represents as being nothing else than *wood, hay, stubble*, which one day shall be consumed by the purifying ordeal of truth. See 1 Cor. ii. 11. In the fifteenth chapter of this epistle, the author directly meets the above argument of the deceivers; and he refutes it by repeatedly holding forth the *humanity* of the Saviour; inculcating hence that, as he was merely a human being, as he possessed only the nature and constitution of man, his resurrection was a proof and a pattern of the resurrection of mankind.

That this is a true statement of the dispute between the Apostles and their false brethren, is a fact which will receive the fullest proof from the analytical view which I propose to take of the Apostolic letters. For this reason I shall here add nothing farther in con-

firmation of it, but conclude with observing, that the association of the Jew, whom Josephus mentions, with the priests of Isis, in teaching the new faith, marks the progress of Paul's ideas in the epistle which he addressed to the Roman converts, and divides it into three general branches. The first of these comprehends his reasonings against those Jews, who endeavoured to incorporate with the Gospel the Jewish rites, and extends to the close of chapter four; the second the arguments, which he advances in opposition to those Egyptians who blended with it the Egyptian superstition, and which terminates with the eleventh chapter; the third, extending thence to the end, is merely preceptive, and occupied in enumerating and recommending those virtues and duties, which, as Christians, they were under peculiar obligations to cultivate and to practise.

THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
ANALYSED.



PAUL begins his Epistle to the Roman converts with reminding them that he was an *Apostle*.* This he does, in order to impress more deeply the sentiments which he was going to deliver, and to bear down by the weight of his authority the false notions of his opponents. He, however, modestly insinuates that he did not possess that dignity as a matter of right, but had received it as a favour from Jesus Christ. “From whom I received the favour of an Apostleship, that all the Gentiles might believe in his name.” ver. 6. The persons who first taught the Gnostic heresy, so far from acknowledging their subordination to our Lord, pretended to be equal, if not superior, to him in power

* The Pharisaical teachers, who opposed the Apostle Paul, rejected his authority, and seem even to have denied that he was called to be an Apostle. The authority of his apostolic commission, he here indirectly asserts. In opposition to his vilifiers he maintains that he was not only called of God to be an Apostle, but also *separated* or *pre-ordained* unto this divine Gospel; see Acts ix. 14. also Gal. i. where he vindicates himself in a more direct manner from the charge of acting without the authority of God.

and wisdom. But our author, though called to be an Apostle, sets out with declaring himself a *Servant* of Jesus Christ; and he insinuates that all should believe *in his name*, and not in the name of any self-commissioned teacher, as the medium of salvation. Simon Magus and his first followers, we have seen, claimed this honourable character, in opposition to the Son of God, * Vol. ii. p. 402; and though the Apostles were very particular in holding forth their subordination to Jesus, yet the first converts, for a while, erroneously regarded them as principals in the new faith. Vol, ii. p. 470, 471. See also 1 Cor. i. 12.

The Gospel, as preached by the anti-apostolic teachers, if indeed it deserved that name, consisted of falsehoods and fictions, which had no other object in view than to gratify the selfish passions of its authors. In reference to that Gospel of men, as it might be stiled, Paul here calls that which he preached, *a Gospel of God*; that is, a Gospel, which originated with God, and not with men; which contains an information the most joyful to mankind, and is designed to raise them to a participation of the divine nature. The enemies of Christianity, on one hand, argued against its divine origin, on account of the novelty of its doctrines and the recentness of

* Our Lord commanded his disciples to regard him as their sole Master, and to present their petitions to God in his name alone, as the only true medium of addressing the Father, to the exclusion of all those who affected to oppose or rival him. Who those impostors were, we have already seen from Irenæus, Lib. iii. Cap. 2. Ignatius in his epistles has frequent allusions to those men who, though classed among the followers of Christ, pretended to be equal to him. See Epist ad Trall. Cap. vii. viii. ix. where he maintains that there is but one Christ, that to him alone, as to one temple, we should come; that he proceeded from the Father, and not from *Sige*, and that they regarded him as their sole Master.

its appearance, while the Gnostics, on the other, rejected those predictions of the Jewish prophets, which proved the divine mission of Jesus. Against these opposite extremes of error, the language of our Apostle seems to have been levelled, when he declares that the Gospel had before been proclaimed by the inspired penmen: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated for the Gospel of God, which he had aforetime proclaimed by his prophets."* He subjoins, however, that it was proclaimed *in the holy Scriptures*, that is, in the Jewish Scriptures; intimating that those predictions of the coming Messiah, delivered by the pagan oracles, proceeded not from divine inspiration, but were the forgeries of men unworthy of credit.† The deceivers maintained, that Christ was an Angel, Æon, or God, and not a human being, and that consequently he could not have derived his extraction from David. In opposition to these notions, the writer represents him as being the Son of God, and as having

* The ancient commentators understood the Apostle as levelling his language against these objections. Thus Theophylact explains his words, *Επειδή ως καινον διεβαλλον το κηρυγμα, δεικνυσιν αυτο πρεσβυτερον ον και Ελληνων, και εν προφηταις προδιαγραφομενον*. Chrysostom is the original author of this remark. See his comment *in loco*. Theodoret explains the paragraph in a similar manner. "Paul, first of all, shews the antiquity of the Gospel, lest any of the unwise should reject it as new."

† Theodoret seems to have fully comprehended our author in this place. His comment is as follows, *Πληρης γαρ η παλαια διαθηκη των περι Κυριου προρησεων το δε αγιας ουχι απλως θεθεικε αλλα πρωτον μεν ως και την παλαιαν θειαν οιδε γραφην· ειτα πασαν αποκριων την αλλοτριαν*. *The Old Testament abounds with predictions respecting the Lord: nor has he annexed HOLY in a vain sense; for, first, he knew the Old Scripture to be divine, excluding, moreover, all other writings as foreign.*

sprung from that patriarch, “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh.” ver. 3.

The divine power with which our Lord was endued, the benevolent purposes for which he wrought his miracles, together with the testimony of God himself, declaring him at his baptism to be his beloved son, prove in the estimation of sober reason, the justice of his claims to that character. But what confirmed it with still greater certainty, and removed all doubt that he is the Messenger of Heaven, was his *resurrection* from the dead. This fact, though the grand basis of the christian faith, the Gnostic impostors denied. Paul here urges the truth of it; and his words imply that, Jesus being raised by the divine power, and not by virtue of his own, was not, what they maintained, a God but a Son of God; “Confirmed * to be a son of God in power, by his resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness.” 4. He rose, according to the *spirit of holiness*, or the *Holy Spirit*; because the Holy Spirit restored him to life, and enabled his Apostles to work miracles in corroboration of his having really risen from the grave and ascended to heaven. See Vol. ii. p. 446, 464, 465. By the phrase *spirit of holiness*, our author means God himself, who is a pure and spiritual Being. He uses the *abstract* for the *concrete*, seemingly to place in a stronger light the *holiness* of Jehovah, and thus to guard the

* The original of *confirmed* is ὁρισθεντος, which Chrysostom explains, by αποδειχθεντος, αποφανθεντος, and Theophylact after him, by βεβαιωθεντος, κριθεντος, for adds the latter, ὁρος εστιν ἡ κρισις. The Apostle then, it seems, asserts that the resurrection of Jesus by a solid, and as it were, a judicial evidence, confirmed the predictions of the prophets, and places on a sure foundation the inference drawn from his miracles, that he is the Son of God.

converts against the impious sentiments of those, who, through ignorance or depravity, blasphemed him as evil and impure. Between such men as these, and the virtuous professors of Christianity, he thus distinguishes in the following salutation: "To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, and called *holy* men, to you be favour and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." 6. Which may be paraphrased in this manner: "All among you, whether Jews or Gentiles, who, instead of vilifying God as a wicked, love him as a good Being—All who, professing the gospel, cultivate in consequence holiness or moral purity, I salute; to those that answer this description, I announce the free gift of eternal life, peace with God, and the privilege of addressing him as your Father."

Paul next assures the converts, that though he was not personally known to them, yet he so rejoiced in their conversion, as to make it the subject of his daily thanksgiving to God through Jesus Christ; teaching them by this, that the Supreme Being, so far from meriting the unamiable representation given of him by some, was entitled to their gratitude and praise*; that Jesus Christ was the only way of addressing him, and that we should have the welfare of others so much at heart, as to be thankful to the Great Giver for whatever good befalls them. "In the first place, I give thanks to God, through Jesus Christ, on account of

* The deceivers, representing the Creator of the world as being evil, consistently enough maintained that he was not an object deserving of gratitude and supplication. Hence Ignatius, in his epistle to the *Smyrnanans*, says of them, *Ευχαριστίας και προσευχης απεχονται*. They abstain from thanksgiving and from prayer. For this reason, Paul presently charges them, in common with the Pagan philosophers, with being *unthankful* to God, ver. 21.

you all." The cause, which thus called forth his thanksgiving, is worthy of our notice. The introduction of Christianity into Rome, the conversion of the Jews and Egyptians, without the interference of the Apostles, together with the subsequent dispersion of the new converts, were events so remarkable as to become necessarily a matter of notoriety and conversation in every quarter of the globe. Accordingly our Author subjoins, THAT YOUR FAITH IS PROCLAIMED IN ALL THE WORLD, 8. After this he insinuates, in opposition to those, who rested on ceremonial observances as the means of pleasing God, that from the Gospel revealed by his Son, he learnt to serve his Maker *in the Spirit*, that is, in the exercise of moral virtue, in the cultivation of rational piety and benevolence. "To whom my mind payeth its religious service in the Gospel of his Son." 9.

The superiority which Rome, being the metropolis of a vast empire, and the residence of a splendid court, sustained over other cities; the extraordinary events there produced by the prevalence of Christianity, and the calamities brought upon its professors by the wickedness of a few leading individuals, were circumstances which demanded, if possible, the immediate presence of our great Apostle. His long delay, occasioned by his engagements in the East, furnished his opponents with a specious handle for accusing him of being unconcerned for the interest of the Roman converts, and deterred from visiting that city by the fear of shame or of persecution. This impression, our Apostle must have been very anxious to efface, and he asserts, in the most solemn manner, that he cherished at all times, a heart-felt remembrance of them before

God, and wished for an opportunity of coming to see them: "For God is my witness, how I make mention of you without ceasing in my prayers; requesting that I may, by some means, at length, through the will of God, enjoy an opportunity of coming to you," 9, 10. He had an earnest desire, adds he, to visit the converts in Rome, not indeed that he might derive any honour or advantage from them, but to share with them the miraculous gifts imparted to him, and thus confirm them in the faith and practice of the Gospel. 11, 12. Being anxious to do away the false accusation that he refrained from going thither from a want of concern for their welfare, or from a dread of persecution, he repeats the purpose which he frequently formed of coming to sow among them the seeds of the Gospel. "And I wish you to know, brethren, that I have been hindered hitherto, when I had often purposed to come unto you, that I might reap some fruit among you, also, as among other Gentiles," 13. While he apprised his readers that he had been very successful in disseminating Christianity among the Gentiles, he wished them to consider him as rather receiving than conferring obligations, as more the debtor than the creditor of those who received the faith, and for this reason he was ready, as much as it lay in him, to preach the Gospel to them in Rome.

In no place were fortune, birth, and learning, held in such high estimation, or the want of them deemed so disgraceful, as in that opulent and corrupt metropolis: hence the tide of reproach and contempt, which overwhelmed the first followers of a poor, obscure, and illiterate Master, rolled no where so high as on the banks of the Tyber. To the more aggravated trials and

ignominy, which awaited our author at Rome, and which were perhaps alleged by his adversaries as the cause of his delay in going thither, he next alludes: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith; for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," 16—19.

The Apostle intending, in opposition to the Phari-saical teachers, to insist on faith as the ground-work of salvation, very properly shews what idea he annexed to that term. Accordingly he informs the new converts, that the Gospel of Christ, when become the subject of faith, is a *power of God*, that is, a divine or extraordinarily efficacious principle, regenerating the dispositions, and reforming the lives of those who embrace it; thus saving them from the debasing influence of sin in this world, and from its penal consequences in that which is to come. In reference to those men, who were unwilling indiscriminately to extend to the Gentiles, the privileges of the Gospel, unless they conformed to the letter of the Mosaic law, he intimates that every Greek, as well as Jew, who cherished a practical faith in the Gospel, might share in its blessings: "Because it is a divine power for the salvation of every one that believeth it, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In support of the assertion, that an efficacious belief in the divine mission of Christ, and not the observance of ceremonies, was the way to be saved, he quotes one of those prophets

that were rejected by the Jewish Gnostics, Hab. ii. 4.
 “ *As it is written, the just shall live by faith.*” * By

* The apostle, it will soon appear, has a reference in this place to those of the Jewish converts, who, in common with other Gnostics, rejected the inspiration of the prophets. This reference will enable us to ascertain the precise meaning of the obscure clause, *Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.* It may be paraphrased thus: “The scheme of redemption was at first partly revealed in the prophetic writings, and afterwards more fully revealed in the Gospel. Consequently the former being a proper object of our faith, should lead us to the exercise of a firm and rational faith in Jesus, who, conformably to the prediction of the prophets, brought life and immortality to light.” Similar to this is the interpretation of Theodoret, and Clement of Alexandria. The former thus explains the words: *Δει γαρ πιστευσαι τοις προφηταις, και δι εκεινων εις την του ευαγγελιου πισιν ποδογηθηναι.* *From faith to faith—For it is fit to believe the prophets, and by them to be conducted to the belief of the Gospel.* The following are the words of the latter, *Δικαιοσυνη Θεου εν αυτω αποκαλυπτεται εκ πισεως εις πισιν, την εκ προφητειας εις ευαγγελιον τετελειωμενην,* Strom. Lib. ii. Cap. 6. p. 444. *The forgiveness of God is revealed from faith to faith, being the same faith which is perfected from prophecy to the Gospel.* The words of our Apostle, if considered in reference to those Judaizing zealots, who pleaded for rites and ceremonies as the means of justification, may easily admit of the interpretation given them by Locke. “The righteousness of which God is the author, and which he accepts in the way of his own appointment, *is revealed from faith to faith*; i. e. to be all through, from one end to the other, founded in faith.” As they refer the origin of the Christian faith to the Jewish prophets, and thus assert, in opposition to those who rejected them, their divine inspiration, and the propriety of extending thence our belief to the Gospel, they well accord with the explanation of Taylor, when he says: “The salvation, God has provided in the Gospel, *is from faith to faith*, or wholly of faith on our part, by way of progress and improvement, from the first faith to a still higher degree; signifying the advances that we ought to make in this grand principle of our religion,” which is the interpretation also of Clement, Strom. Lib. i. p. 644. Lastly, as our author had an eye to those unbelievers, who objected to the Gospel as being *new*, and till then unheard of, we may thus paraphrase the words with Mr. Wakefield: “Non est figmentum inauditum hæc fides quam inculcamus. *Leges et prophetæ jam diu eam virtutem discipulis suis prælegerunt,*” Syl. Crit. Pars. Quar. Sec. 185.

which he intimates, that those only shall be saved, who seek salvation by *faith*, and who in consequence are *just, holy, and virtuous*, and not those who adhere to forms and ceremonies, while they neglect the great principles of justice and purity. The Jew, with his Egyptian associates, who, as Josephus informs us, were wicked in every respect, denied that there existed, in the nature of things, any grounds for a distinction between virtue and vice, and consequently that there is any propriety in approving and rewarding the one, or in censuring and punishing the other. In contradiction, seemingly, to this dangerous doctrine, the Apostle holds up the author of nature, as extending through the medium of revelation, his forgiving mercy towards the *righteous*, and denouncing severe punishment against *all ungodly and unrighteous men*, ver. 17, 18. The persons above mentioned, while they affected to believe and to teach the Christian doctrine, proved the unhappy means of retarding its progress. They corrupted the native purity of Christianity, and thus precluded its divine influence, while their vices laid the foundation of those calumnies which the enemies of Jesus indiscriminately extended to his followers.* This feature in the character of

* It is worthy of remark, that the Apostle very sagaciously directed the wicked men, whom he had in view, to a passage in the Jewish writings, very descriptive of the flagrant vices which distinguished them. The Jew and his associates were addicted to wine, prided in their superior wisdom, appropriated to themselves things that did not belong to them, acknowledged the existence, and worshipped the images of inferior divinities. Josephus too assures us, that the former left his own country to avoid the punishment due to his guilt. Read now a part of the passage which our author brought to the recollection of that man. "Behold! his soul, which is lifted up, is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith: Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell,

those men developes the pertinence and justice of the following verse: "And severe punishment is denounced from heaven, against all ungodly and unrighteous men; WHO HINDER THE TRUTH BY THEIR WICKEDNESS.* Those philologers, it is true, might not have been acquainted with those oracles of God, contained in the Jewish scriptures, which teach us that Jehovah ruleth in the heavens, that he is the righteous Lord loving righteousness; yet they were inexcusable, as the volume of nature, in which are written in legible characters the divine perfections, was open to the

and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people.—Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his: and how long? 4—5, 6. What profiteth the graven image, that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image and teachers of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, or make him dumb idols," ver. 18. The crimes of which the impostors were guilty awakened the jealousy of the government; and we are informed by the Jewish historian, that the misconduct of those few brought great distress upon all the Jews and Egyptians in Rome. To their guilt in this respect, the language of the prophet was singularly appropriate: "Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them? Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee: because of men's blood, for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein." Paul appears, from the pertinence of this citation, to have been so well versed in the Jewish Scriptures, as to fix his mind at the spur of the moment, on whatever passage best suited his purpose. Instead of provoking the anger of those bad men, by holding before them a picture of their vices, drawn with his own hand, he gently and imperceptibly presents them with a mirror, in which they might clearly discern the peculiar features of their character.

* Epiphanius, it should be observed, rightly enough considers these words of Paul, as referring to the first Gnostic teachers, whose falsehoods and vices had brought disgrace on the Christian name, and by that means retarded its progress in the world. See how he applies them to the followers of Basilides. Hær. xxiv. p. 71, and to those of Nicolaus. Hær. xxv. p. 81.

Pagan as well as to the Jew. This is what our author next asserts : and in order to moderate the undue pride of the latter in supposing that the disciples of Moses alone had any knowledge of the true God, and to point out the unjustifiable perversion of the former in not making a proper use of that information which his reason gave him, the Apostle subjoins ; “ Because that which may be known of God, is manifest among them, for God hath displayed it unto them : for the invisible properties of him, even his eternal power and divinity,* are become visible from the structure of the world, being discerned (by the understanding) in the things that are made, so that they are without excuse,” 19, 20 : which simply means this : “ The existence and attributes of the Deity, though undiscernible to sense, are recognised by reason in the formation and

* The power which Jehovah displayed, in delivering his chosen people from Egypt, however signal, was yet *transient*; and the belief of its having been really exerted died away, in respect to many, with the age of Moses. Paul was now addressing men who were acquainted with those events, but who probably affected to disbelieve their truth. In allusion, I conceive, to that miraculous interposition of God, which was no longer visible, he asserts that the power of the Creator, manifested in the heavens, is *eternal*, and incapable, as in the other case, of being disputed. The term *θεος*, *God*, from which, *θεοτης*, *divinity*, is taken, implies in itself the idea of *goodness*, being synonymous with *αγαθος*, which is a contraction of *αγαθουθεος* (Vol. ii. p. 189.) This analogy led Philo to say some where, ο θεος αγαθοτητος εστι ονομα, *God is the name of goodness*. The term *θεοτης*, *divinity*, thus here used by the Apostle, is very appropriate, as his object was to inculcate on men, who hated and vilified God, that his *goodness* is visible from his works. Hence we may see the force of Cyril's reasoning, Catech. vi. p. 52. when he thus says of the Gnostics. Ετολμησαν ειπειν ουτοι δυο θεοτητας, μιαν αγαθην, και μιαν κακην ; ω πολλης αβλεψιας ! ει θεοτης, παντως και αγαθη. ει δε ουκ αγαθη, τι καλειται θεοτης ; &c.

arrangements of the universe..”* This reflection of the Deity from his works, Paul expresses under the figure of a mirror which reflects to the eye, and thus renders visible, the image of an object that is itself unseen. The wicked Jew, who though a nominal convert adhered to the rites of the law, united with the Egyptian philologers in preaching, or rather in perverting, the new religion. Now this circumstance will account for the abrupt transition which may be here discerned in the ideas of our author. After asserting, in opposition to some Judaizing zealots, that faith was the means of salvation, and that the Gentiles as well as the Jews were included in its scheme, he passes over to certain men, notorious for their vices, who had no knowledge of God but from the light of nature, and who united with their new belief the practice of idolatry. By an easy association, he was hence led to animadvert on those Egyptian philosophers who first founded, and on those who in after ages supported, the pagan superstition; “ Because that when they knew

† Aristotle, in his book *De Mundo*, speaks of the author of the world in a stile unusually grand and beautiful. A clause of this much resembles what is here said by our Apostle, Παση θνητη φουσει (θεος) γενομενος αδεωρητος, απ’ αυτων των εργαων θεωρειται, p. 43. *Glasgow Edition*. Read Maclaurin’s Account of Newton’s Discoveries, Chap. ix. 6. Very similar to the above is the following passage of Athenagoras in his *Legation*, p. 23. *Oxford Edition*, Τον δε απο των εργαων οφει των κδηλων νοων τα φαινομενα, αερος, αιθερος, γης. This passage is very much corrupted; but if you read δηλων for αδηλων, or, as some propose, insert the negative ουκ; and if, farther, τα φαινομενα be changed into τον φαινομενον, the whole will convey this simple meaning. *Thou wilt see this (supreme intelligent God) from his works, which are not (like himself) invisible, perceiving him (by thy understanding) displaying himself in the air, heaven, earth.* The passage is differently mended by Mr. Wakefield, but his emendations appear to me too violent. *Silva Critica*, Pars. Quar. Sec. 185.

God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things," 21—24.

This passage implies, or rather asserts, that, while the men here mentioned were convinced, there existed a supreme intelligent Being, who created all things and alone justly claimed their homage, gratitude and praise, yet, in defiance of their conviction, and in direct opposition to their better judgment, they transferred to idols, in the form of created things, that religious reverence which they knew to be due to God alone. This implication is well deserving of our attention. In order to unfold its justice, it is necessary to deviate a little from the subject. In vol. ii. p. 120. it is affirmed that the fabulous accounts transmitted to posterity, respecting the calamities inflicted upon Egypt by Typho in his quarrels with Isis and Osiris, are founded in those plagues which Jehovah brought on that country by his servant Moses. In support of this assertion, the truth of which I hope fully to demonstrate in my future researches, some evidence has already been offered; and if admitted to be just, it will obviously follow that the Egyptian theology was fabricated in opposition to the system of Moses. This conclusion I shall here attempt to confirm by a passage or two from *Sanchoniaton*. This writer, a Phœnician supposed to have flourished about the times of the Trojan War, composed a history of the theology of that people. A fragment of his works now lost, is happily preserved by Eusebi-

us in his *Evangelical Preparation*. From the stile and matter of this ancient production, if properly examined we may infer that the account of the creation, given by the Phœnician and Egyptian philologers, was not only levelled against the Mosaic history,* but was copied from the Jewish records, and perverted in a manner the most likely to bring those records into neglect and discredit. I select the following passage as a specimen of the whole. “With these, was one Elian called Hypsistus, and a woman named Beruth. Of them were born Epigæus, whom they afterwards called *Uranus*. From him the firmament above us received

* The account which the Phœnician theologists give of the world, and the creation of man, appears to me evidently levelled against the history of Moses, and to have no other object in view than to undermine the truth of it. It is in part as follows, “The theology of the Phœnicians (relates Sanchoniathon) supposes the principle of all things to be air, dark and windy, or the breath of dark air, and a turbid gloomy chaos. When the wind became enamoured of its own principles, and mixed with them, their union was called *desire*. This was the creating principle of all things; but it did not recognise the thing created by it. From the union of wind and creation, proceeded *Moth*, which some call *llus*, (mud) and others the putrifaction of watery mixture. From this proceeded every seed of creation and the production of all things. There were some animals, which had no sensation, but out of which were produced intelligent beings—These intelligent beings awoke at a clap of thunder; alarmed at the sound they began to move, male and female, both on land and in the sea,” *Præpar. Evan. Lib. i. Cap. 10*. This narrative is so ridiculous, that the authors of it, whoever they were, could not have been serious. The beginning, it must be allowed, bears some resemblance to what is said in the first verses of Genesis: and this, with other references which it has to the history of Moses, seems to me sufficiently to prove that it is levelled against the system of that historian.—His grand object was to inculcate, that all things have been created by a divine Intelligence, distinct from the works of nature. The design of those physiologists, on the contrary, was to fix the attention of men on the senseless properties of matter, as the sole and primary cause of all things.

its name. This person had also a sister of the same parents, called *Ge*, from whom, on account of her great beauty, the earth was so called. *Hypsisstus*, the father, being destroyed by wild beasts, was deified, and his children offered him religious honours. *Uranus* having assumed the government of his father, married his sister *Ge*, and by her begat *Ilus*, *Kronus*, *Betulus*, *Dagon*, and *Atlas*.—*Kronus* having a son called *Sadidus*, pierced him with his own sword, being prompted by jealousy to deprive him of life: in like manner he beheaded his own daughter, so that all the Gods became shocked at his disposition. *Uranus* after this, being in banishment, sent his daughter *Astarte* with her sisters *Rhea* and *Dione*, to take off *Kronus* by stratagem; but *Kronus* seized them, and, though his own sisters, made them his wives. On knowing this, *Uranus* dispatched against him *Himarmene* and *Hora*. But these again *Kronus* appropriated and detained in his family.—*Kronus* had by *Astarte* seven daughters, called *Titanides*, and by *Rhea*, seven sons, the youngest of whom was consecrated at his birth.”* Now if you narrowly examine this fictitious narrative, it will appear susceptible of the following interpretation. *Eliun* seems to be a corruption of *Elohim*, the Hebrew name of God. Conformably to this, he was also called *Hyp-*

* Κατα τούτους γίνεται τις Ελιουν καλουμενος Ύψιζος, και θηλεια λεγομενη Βηρουθ, οι και κατωκουν περι Βυβλον, εξ αν γενναται Επιγεις η Αυτοχθων, ον υστερον εκαλεσαν Ουρανον. ως απ' αυτου και το υπερ ημας ζοιχειον, δι' υπερβολην του καλλους ονομαζειν ουρανον. γενναται δε τούτω αδελφη εκ των προειρημενων, η και εκληθη Γη, και δια το καλλος απ' αυτης, φησιν, εκαλεσαν την εμωνυμον γην. Ο δε τούτων πατηρ ο Ύψιζος εκ συμβολης θηριων τελευτησας αφιερωθη, ω και χρας και θυσιας οι παιδες ετελεσαν. παραλαβων δε ο Ουρανος την του πατρος αρχην, αγεται προς γαμον την αδελφην Γην, και ποιειται

system (ὕψισος) *the Most High*. This last is said to have been the parent of Uranus, (heaven) and Ge, (earth); which means that, as Moses has recorded, The Most High created heaven and earth. Again, Uranus is represented to having married his sister Ge, and by her to have begotten Kronus, Betulus, Ilus, and Dagon; that is, by the united influences of the sun and of the earth, were at first generated *time, stone, mire, corn*. Time, according to the ancient philosophers,* had no existence before the heavens were formed. Kronus having slain his son, and married his sister Astarte (Moon) signifies, that whatever time brings forth is also des-

παιδίας, Ἴλον και Κρονον, και Βητυλον, Δαγων ὅς ἐστι σιτον και Ατλαντα.—Κρονος δε ἱον εχων Σαδιδον, ἰδιω αὐτον σιδηρω διεχρησατο, δι ὑπονοιας αὐτον εσχηκως, και της ψυχης, αυτοχειρ του παιδος γενομενος, εσερησεν. ωσαυτως και θυγατρος ἰδιας την κεφαλην απετεμεν, ὡσε παντας εκπεπληχθαι θεους της Κρονου γνωμης. χρονου δε προιοντος Ουρανος εν φυγη τυγχανων, θυγατερα αὐτου παρθενον μεθ ἑτερων αὐτης αδελφων δυο, Ρεας και Διωνης, δολω τον Κρονον ανελευν ὑποπεμπει· ἄς και ἔλων ὁ Κρονος κουριδιας γαμετας αδελφας ουσας εποησαστο. γνους δε ὁ Ουρανος επιστρατευει κατα του Κρονου Ειμαρμενην και Ὀραν μεθ ἑτερων συμμαχων, και ταυτας ἐξοικειωσαμενος Κρονος, παρ ἑαυτω κατεσχεν. Κρονω δε εγεγοντο απο Ασαρτης θυγατερες ἑπτα Τιτανιδες η Αρτεμιδες, και παλιν τω αὐτω γινονται απο Ρεας παιδες ἑπτα, ὧν ὁ νεωτατος αμα τη γενεσει αφιερωθη, Πραπαρ. Evan. Lib. i. Cap. 10. p. 36, 37.

* This was the opinion of Philo. Χρονος ουκ ην προ κοσμου αλλα η συν αὐτω γεγονεν η μετ αὐτον. Επειδη γαρ διασημα της του κοσμου κινήσεως εσιν ὁ χρονος, προτερα του κινουμενου κινήσεως ουκ αν γενοιτο, αλλα αναγκαιον αὐτην η ὑστερον η αμα συνισασθαι· αναγκαιον αρα και τον χρονον ἰσηλικω του κοσμου γεγωναί, η νεωτερον εκεινου, Vol. i. p. 6.

troved by it, and that the moon, while its motion marks out the present, serves by its revolutions to measure the past. Finally, the seven sons and daughters, Time had by Astarte and Dione, mean those seven days and nights which, as Moses relates, succeeded each other at the creation. The last of these was sanctified by the Deity, having now rested from his labour : And this is what we are to understand by the last or youngest son being consecrated at his birth.

Let us now see what light the above passage, thus interpreted, throws on the words of our Apostle. " They are," says he, " without excuse, because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God." In respect to the first authors of idolatry, the assertion is evidently just. They were inexcusable, inasmuch as they wantonly turned into fable facts, which they knew to be true, and the truth of which they could not with effect deny. They knew God, not only from his works, but also from the records of his servant Moses ; and yet such was their depravity, that they wilfully ridiculed and blasphemed him. Their hatred of Jehovah is easily accounted for. The calamities, which he inflicted on the Egyptians, naturally led them to consider him as a malevolent Being. Of the shocking manner, in which they vilified the Creator of the world, we have a specimen in the above paragraph, " The Most High, being destroyed by wild beasts, was deified by his children, who performed in honour of him oblations and sacrifices." The malicious spirit which dictated this representation, did not die away with the original authors in Egypt, but was kept alive and perpetuated by those rites, which the magicians instituted after the departure

of the Israelites. Even in the times of our Lord, the envy and malice, which the Egyptians cherished against the Jews, induced them to hate and vilify the God of their fathers, and oppose to him a Being pretended to be superior in power and goodness. So deeply rooted was their aversion of him that the Christian doctrine could not extirpate it from the breasts of its professors. So far was this from being the case, that the Egyptian Gnostics imported into the Church of Christ the most unworthy notions of God. To the blasphemous manner in which they arraigned his perfections, the language of Paul, in this and other places, is directly and pointedly opposed. "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, *who is to be blessed for ever,*" which means, "God ought not to be blasphemed and hated, but praised and loved." Those who, when they knew God, refused to glorify him and to be thankful, our Apostle represents in verse 30 as *haters of God*. From these he distinguishes the faithful disciples by saluting them as *beloved of God*, 7. The Jewish legislator, relating the creation and fall of man, holds up the serpent to eternal execration, as the primary cause which deprived the human race of paradisiacal felicity. This imputation, and the aversion which on that account it excited in the founders of the Jewish nation, seem to have induced the Pagan priests to become its advocates. Representing that animal as the symbol of divine wisdom, they enjoined the worship of it in opposition to that of Jehovah. That the Phœnicians as well as the Egyptians, adored the serpent, is a fact attested

by Sanchoniathon,* who enumerates the peculiar qualities which entitle it to that honour. To the folly and baseness of the Pagans, in transferring to a reptile the properties and prerogative of God, Paul thus obviously adverts—"Who changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to—*creeping things.*" 23.

As the divinities, which the Pagans worshipped, were mere *abstract ideus* or *physical operations*, invested with the figures of living beings, and the qualities of moral agents, they are properly and significantly said in the Jewish writings to be *vanities* and *lies*,† terms

* ΤΗΝ ΜΕΝ ΟΥΝ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΚΟΝΤΟΣ ΦΥΣΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΟΦΕΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΣ ΕΞΕΘΕΙΑΣΕΝ Ὁ ΤΑΑΥΤΟΣ, ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤ' ΑΥΤΟΝ ΑΥΘΙΣ ΦΟΙΝΙΚΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΟΙ. ΠΡΑΡ. ΕΥΑΝ. Lib. i. p. 40. Whoever attentively reads what the Phœnician writer has added in the sequel concerning the serpent, must I think, conclude that it is levelled against the account which the Jewish lawgiver gives of that animal. Be it here observed, that the first deification of the serpent originated not with the Phœnicians, but with the Egyptians; since Taautus, said to have first deified it, belonged to the latter. Hence it is to be inferred that the theology of these two people flowed from the same source, This being *Thouth*, one of the earliest and most renowned of the Egyptian Magi.

† "What it is to become vain in the Scripture language," says Locke, "one may see in these words, *And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the Heathen, and made to themselves molten images, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal,* 2 Kings xvii. 15, 16. And accordingly the forsaking of idolatry, and the worship of false gods is called by St. Paul, *turning from vanity to the living God,* Acts xiv. 15. Let me add the following instance from Jeremiah xvii. 19. "The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our Fathers have inherited *lies, vanity,* and things wherein there is no profit." For *lies* and *vanity* the LXX. have ψευδη εἰδωλα, *lying idols.* Some of the ancient Christians consider the commandment, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,* as if it enjoined not to transfer to an idol, or a false and vain god, the name of the true God,

which imply, that they had no correspondence among real objects, no foundation in truth, no existence but in the imagination of vain and lying men. Conformably to this representation, the authors of idolatry are here accused of changing *the truth of God into A LIE.*

Whatever ideas the first idolaters connected with the fabulous representations of their gods, and of nature, their systems became, in process of time, necessarily involved in endless uncertainties, obscurity, and confusion. The internal signification, which constituted their philosophy, while it served to exercise the ingenuity of the learned, and to display their superiority over the vulgar, who were taught to acquiesce in the literal sense, proved the prolific parent of pride and

Tertul, p. 98, &c. With the violation of this precept Paul here charges the idolaters, when he says, "They changed the truth of God into a lie," that is, They exchanged the true God for a lying god, the *abstract* being used, as is customary with our author, for the *concrete*. The great Poet, when speaking of the fallen angels as the authors of idolatry, thus alludes to this passage of Paul;

Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 Got them new names, till wandering o'er the earth,
 Through God's high suff'rance for the trial of man,
 By *falsities* and *lies*, the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and the invisible
 Glory of him that made them to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And Devils to adore for Deities.——B. I. 364, 373.

For *falsities*, Milton either wrote, or ought to have written *vanities*; because this epithet is usually joined with *lies* in the Scripture to characterise the heathen idols, and because *falsities* and *lies* convey the same idea without a shadow of distinction, and are therefore tautologous.

vanity, no less than of vice and impiety. Hence the justice of Paul's remark, "They became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened." 21.*

The circumstance of polytheism being opposed to the Jewish theology, furnishes a sure clue to ascertain the design which its authors had in its fabrication. This was to lead men from the knowledge and imitation of the true God, and by consequence to preclude the cultivation of those divine, social, and personal virtues, which his law enjoins; and, on the other hand, to give a free scope to the opposite vices therein prohibited.† In order to make sure of this base end, the

* That the heathen philosophy had a tendency to produce pride, vanity, and even impiety, might fairly be inferred from its very nature. But this is directly asserted by the wisest and best of all the pagan philosophers, who on this account abstained from the study of it. "Socrates did not," writes the historian of his life, "discourse, as most others do, concerning the nature of all things; examining how the universe, as it is called by the Sophists, came into being, and by what inevitable laws the celestial bodies are regulated. He even demonstrated that those, who deliberate about such things, become foolish," *Αλλα και τους φροντιζοντας τα τοιαυτα μωραινοντας επεδεικνυεν*. Xen. Memor, Lib. Cap. i. 11. The words, which Plato in his Dialogue concerning the Soul puts into the mouth of the Athenian Sage, verify in his own case what Paul affirms to be true respecting the Philosophers in general. *Εγω α και προτερον σαφως ηπισαμην, ως γε εμαυτω και τοις αλλοις εδοκουν, υπ αυτης της σκεψεως ουτω σφοδρα ετυφλωθην, ωσε απειμαθον και ταυθ' α προτου ωμην ειδεναι*, Euseb. Præp. Evan. p. 26. What Lactantius with great elegance says of the Pagan philosophers, well agrees with the above language of Paul. *Superstitionibus vanis pertinaciter in hærentes, obdurant se contra manifestam veritatem, non tam de suis religionibus quas prave asserunt benemeriti quam de se male, qui cum habeant iter rectum, devios sequuntur amfractus; planum deserunt, ut per præcipitium labantur; lucem relinquunt, ut in tenebris cæci ac debiles jaceant*, p. 6.

† Eusebius asserts, with no less confidence than truth, that men at first were led to worship false gods from the love of *pleasure*, which they

authors of idolatry held up to the people as objects of divine honour, those among men and animals which were most distinguished by violence, cruelty, lust and rapine.* Nor was this all. In order to familiarize

made the great end of life, and to which they therefore sacrificed as to a God; and that in consequence of this, they became necessarily involved in all kinds of wretchedness and depravity. His own words in part are the following; Ταυτη δ' ουν το παντων ανθρωπων γενοσ, ος αν δεσπονη πικρα και χαλεπωτατη Ἡδονη Θεω, μαλλον δε αισχρω και ακολασω δαίμονι καταδεδουλωμενους, Præp. Evan. Lib. vii. Chap. ii. p. 300. In proof that the object of the first idolaters was to corrupt the morals of mankind, and thus to turn the public depravity to their own interests, accept the following fact, which admits of no solution on any other supposition. The ancient Phenician women were taught, that the most acceptable way of worshipping the Gods was to prostitute themselves before their idols, and give their gains to them, that is, to their priests. This fact is thus attested by Athanasius; Γυναικες γουν εν ειδωλοισ της Φοινικης παλαι προεκαθειζοντο, απαρχομενχι τοις εκει θεοις εαυτων την του σωματος αυτων μισθαργιαν νομιζουσαι τη πορνεια τον θεον εαυτων ιλασκεσθαι, και εις ευμενειαν αγειν αυτην δια τουτων. Contra Gentes fol. 21. Hence it happened that every temple, consecrated to idolatry, was made the theatre of the grossest impurities. Hence too Octavius asks, Ubi autem magis a sacerdotibus, quam inter aras et delubra conducuntur stupra, tractantur lenocinia, adulteria meditantur? Frequentius denique in ædituorum cellulis, quam in ipsis lupanaribus flagrans libido defungitur: Min. Fel. p. 237. The same thing is attested by Tertullian, p. 15. That enormities of this kind were practised in all the Pagan temples, is a fact recorded by some of the heathen writers. Quo non prostat fœmina templo? is a question which Juvenal puts with great indignation. See also Suetonius in Tiberio, Cap 44.

* Philo thus speaks of the animals adored by the Egyptians. Των μεν γαρ παρ Αιγυπτιοις ουδε μεμνησθαι καλον. οι ζωα αλογα και ευχ ημερα μονου, αλλα και θηρια τα αγριωτατα παραγνοχασιν εις θεων τιμας, εξ εκαστου των κατω σεληνης· χερσαιων μεν λεοντα, ευδραν δε τον εγχαωριον κροκοδειλον, αεροπορων δε ικτινον και την Αιγυπτιαν ιβιν. Και ταυτα οδρωντες γεννωμενα και τροφης χρειας εχοντα, και περι εδωδην απλησα, και περιπτωματων μεσα, ιοβολα τε και ανθρωποβορα, και νοσοις αλωτα παντοιαις, και ου μονου θανατω τω κατα φυσιν, αλλα και β.π.ω. πολλακις διαφθειρομενα προσκνυουσιν, οι ημεροι τα κνημερα και

their deluded followers with moral turpitude, they blended with the narratives, which they gave of their divinities, and with the rites which they offered them, ideas so impure, and practices so impious, as could not fail to extinguish, in the initiated, every virtuous principle and every moral feeling. The Pagan superstition, after it had been imported into Greece, and thence transmitted into Rome, still retained the same pernicious character and tendency. During the most splendid periods of Grecian and Roman refinement, it continued, under the plea of being necessary to govern the people, “to be the grand engine of political tyranny and popular delusion, and to bar all access to the entrance of truth and freedom, purity and simplicity.” For this reason, the introduction of idolatry is represented, in the Jewish writings,* as the sole fountain

ατιθασσα, και οι λογικοι τα αλογα' και οι συγγενειαν εχοντες προς το θειον, τα μηδε αν θηρσι τισι συγκριθεντα' οι αρχοντες και δεσποται τα υπηκοα και δουλα, *De Vita Contem.* Vol. ii. p. 472. With respect to the *men*, whom the heathens deified and worshipped, they were distinguished by crimes the most atrocious, by dispositions the most cruel, and passions the most impure. Hence the above noble author with justice remarks, Vol. ii. p. 193. 'Ο μεγαισον αν ειη τεκμηριον της επιπολαζουσης ασεβειας ανθρωπων, θεους νομιζοντων, οis ομοιοι ποτε τας φυσεις απευξαιντ' αν γενεσθαι. *The greatest proof of the prevailing impiety of men in acknowledging such Gods is, that they would ever deprecate a likeness to them in tempers and character.*

* “The devising of idols,” says the author of *Wisdom* “was the beginning of fornication, and the invention of them the corruption of life,” Chap. xiv. 12. read the whole chapter. Octavius, speaking of the Pagan vices, says very justly to Cæcilius: *Hæc de vestrorum deorum disciplina descendunt.* p. 291.—*Deos colitis incestos: merito igitur incestum penes vos sæpeprehenditur, semper admittitur,* p. 305. Permit me here to remark, that the author of the *Recognitions* ascribes the origin of idolatry to the same cause which is pointed out above; namely, to the base passions of those in early times, who opposed and corrupted the law of Moses, *Lib. iv. 13.*

of all those immoralities, which like a foul torrent overwhelmed mankind. Our author traces the vices of the heathen world to the same source; and he gives a long catalogue of those impurities, which it had entailed on its votaries. "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error, which is meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient: Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventers of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable unmerciful." 26—31.

From Josephus we learn that the Jew, whom he stigmatises as wicked in every respect, associated with the priests of Isis. This, it may be presumed, was the case with other Jews at Rome, that favoured the Gnostic system. Though they had better means of knowing the will of God than their associates, they did not act worthy of that knowledge, but disgraced themselves with the same crimes. To persons of this description our Apostle appears to refer, when he thus finishes the above picture: "Who knowing the righteous judgment of God, that they who do such things are deserving of death, not only commit them, but also conspire with those that commit the same things.*

* The clause, *Ου μονον αυτα ποιουσιν, αλλα και συνευδοκουσι τοις πεκατοουσιν*, implies that those men in the Christian church, whom

CHAP. II. Paul next apostrophises one of these men in the following manner. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest : for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things." The Pharisaical teachers, even after their conversion to Christianity, were weak or wicked enough to imagine, that because they performed the rites of the law, and descended from Abraham, they should not incur the judgment of God, though they practised those things which they condemned in others. This pernicious notion our Apostle exposes ; and he asserts that the judgment, which God forms, is not regulated by any external consideration, but by the moral qualities of the character, and is therefore strictly conformable to truth or justice ; so that none even of his chosen people shall escape his anger, if they commit those things which he disapproves in the Gentiles. "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth* against them who practise such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things and doest the same,

Paul here addressed, had a connection with some of the Pagan philosophers, whose manners they imitated, and whose conduct they defended and applauded. To the sentence which Tiberius passed upon the leaders of them, Paul may refer when he says, that *they were deserving of death* ; and he insinuates that they stood condemned, not only before a human tribunal, but by the righteous judgment of God himself.

* Michaelis, in his introduction to the New Testament, Vol. i. p. 130. has shewn that the clause *κατ' ἀληθείαν*, which has been the subject of much dispute, is a *Talmudical expression* frequently used in the Rabbinical schools. This, though admitted to be true, is not sufficient to explain the phrase. In order to ascertain the precise meaning, which the Apostle annexed to the word, it is necessary to consider what was the error against which it is levelled. And this was, that the judgment of God was regulated by a regard to the external circumstances, or outward appearance of the persons judged, and not to their inward and moral quali-

that thou shalt escape the judgment of God ?” 2, 3. The character which the heretics gave of God, was that of a hard man, reaping where he hath not sown, and gathering where he hath not strawed, see Vol. ii. p. 49. In opposition to this malicious representation, Paul here describes him to this Jew, under the figure of a Master *rich in goodness*, liberally giving of his goods to his servants, and exercising patience and long-suffering towards them, in order that they might have time and opportunity to improve their talents. “ Or despisest thou the *riches of his goodness* and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance ?” 4. And here he insinuates to the zealots, that though they received the Gospel in name, they were at heart unbelievers, as its divine influence did not soften their tempers and lead them to repentance. On this account, so far from obtaining the favour, they more abundantly heaped up for themselves the wrath of God. “ But after thy *hardness and impenitent heart*, treasurest up unto thyself wrath unto the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” 5. In the next place,

fications. *Truth* in this place, therefore, is synonymous with *strict equity*, or the principle of virtue. Hence in verse 8, the writer opposes the same term to *αδικια iniquity*. See the learned *Hammond*, who explains it in the same manner, and instances *αδικον μαμωνα* the *unjust mammon*, as opposed to *the true riches*. Theodoret explains *κατ αληθειαν* by *κατα θεian Ιησου* according to a *divine decision*, in opposition to the judgments of men, which are often partial and corrupt. This leads me to observe, that this ingenious commentator, with *Chrysostom* and others, conjectures, with much probability, that the Jew here addressed was a ruler, and of course concerned in the administration of justice. The language of Paul then came home to his own bosom, and gently reminded him of the contrast there subsisted between his judicial decisions, and those of God.

our author lays down before his readers the standard, agreeably to which the Supreme Judge will, in the day of trial, dispense rewards and punishments to men; The *actions* which they perform, and not what his opponents maintained, some supposed privileges as the children of Abraham, or their observance of the ceremonial law, constituted this criterion, "Who will render to every man according to *his deeds*." This reward, which God will bestow, he states to be *eternal life*; and those only he represents as entitled to it, who *do good*, not indeed those who do good *occasionally*, or shrink from the performance of it when attended by any evil, but who are *uniform* in the practice of it, and are *patient* under whatever inconveniencies it may entail upon them. "To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour and incorruption, eternal life." Observe here, that the views of the rational Christian are directed to a glory and honour that are *incorruptible*. Of this our Apostle reminds the converts, in order to guard them against a capital error of the false teachers, who, expecting to share in the privileges of a temporal dominion under the Messiah, sought for a glory and honour that were by their own nature liable to *corruption*.

The impostors rejected the true Gospel, as being in its divine purity by no means adapted to gratify their sinister views; they therefore blended with it falsehoods, congenial to their wishes. And these they endeavoured to propagate, not by calm persuasion, not by a peaceable and sober appeal to the understanding of their hearers, but by violence, strife and clamour. Upon these features in their character, the Apostle here touches; and, on account of their guilt in these respects, classes

them with those workers of evil, on whom the divine displeasure will in the end heavily fall. “ But unto them that are contentious,* and do not obey the truth, (do not live in obedience to the true Gospel) but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.” 8, 9. The writer, being anxious to impress upon the minds of his readers a conviction that God is a benevolent Being, and that he takes more pleasure in rewarding the virtuous than in punishing the guilty, repeats in substance what he had already asserted in a preceding verse: “ But glory honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God.” 10, 11.

The author having alleged that the Almighty will reward or punish the Pagan as well as the Jew, proceeds, in order to justify the divine administration, to remark, that though the former had not, like the latter, a knowledge of right and wrong in conduct, from the will of God revealed in his law, nevertheless they were not destitute of a *Moral Sense*; since that love of virtue and hatred of vice, which it was the object of the law to work, were inscribed, as it were, by the hand of nature, on the tablets of their hearts, and approved and disapproved by the voice of conscience.” “ For as many as have sinned without the law, shall also without the law be destroyed: And as many as have sinned under the law,

* By τῶν ἐξ ἐρεθείας the author means ἐριζικοίς, men, who though pretended converts, violently and clamorously opposed the *true Gospel*. He thus describes the same persons, Phil. i. 16. Ὁ, μὲν ἐξ ἐρεθείας τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν οὐχ ἀγνῶς. *These contentious men do not preach Christ with pure views.*

shall be judged by the law. For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified with him. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or excusing one another." 12—16. The Gnostic teachers* denied that nature and reason dictated any distinction between virtue and vice, and that the injunctions which the Mosaic law imposed on the desires of men had any foundation excepting in the arbitrary decrees of a malevolent Being. The fundamental principles of virtue, which they thus endeavoured to undermine, in order to give a free scope to their own passions, and to rescue their deluded followers from the restraints of conscience, are here enforced in emphatic language by our great Apostle. He adds, that the dictates of natural conscience and unaided reason will be sanctioned on a day of final retribution revealed in the Gospel. "In that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus

* Est quidam sermo apud Græcorum philosophos vehementer valde, qui dicit in vita hominum, re ipsa neque bonum esse aliquid, neque malum; sed quæ videntur hominibus, usu et consuetudine præsentis vitæ, hæc aut mala dicunt aut bona, Recog. Lib. x. 5. On these words Cotelerius observes; Archelaum, Cyrenaicos, Theodorum *αθεον* et Pyrrhonios, quorum insaniam secuti sunt postea Gnostici. That this was the opinion of Simon Magus and Carpocrates, is what we have already seen, Vol. ii. p. 49, 253. On this pernicious doctrine, is grounded that apophthegm of Hierocles, related by Agellius, *ἡδονὴ τέλος, πορνῆς δόγμα: οὐκ ἐστὶ πορνεία οὐδὲν, πορνῆς δόγμα*. Which, if I understand it rightly, means this, That pleasure is the chief good, is the sentiment of a harlot; that fornication is no crime, is the sentiment of a harlot.

Christ." The Christian law excels all human laws chiefly in this, that while the latter recognize only such actions as are *visible*, accurately defined and attested, the former takes cognizance also of those works that are done in *secret*, and even meditated in the heart. The anti-apostolic teachers, immoral as they were, felt secure, if they eluded the vigilance, or baffled the power of the civil Magistrate. Here they were admonished that, however they might by their *secrecy* escape human punishment, they shall not escape the punishment of God, because he will judge the *secrets of men*.

As they denied the obligations of virtue, and rejected the doctrine of a future judgment, they taught a Gospel quite different from that of Jesus Christ, preached by the Apostle Paul. He therefore holds up his Gospel, on this occasion, in opposition seemingly to that of the impostors: "When God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL."

The principles of morality, founded in the nature and circumstances of man, are more clearly taught, and more powerfully enforced in the law of Moses. Of this Paul reminds the judaizing Zealot, who, though a boaster of his Jewish privileges, joined with men that derided the commandments of God: "Behold thou callest thyself a Jew, and reposest in the law, and gloriest in God, and approvest the things more excellent, (than those taught by unaided reason) having learned them from the law." 17, 18. The Jewish no less than the Egyptian Gnostics prided in their superior knowledge, and arrogated to themselves lofty titles; while they described, in terms expressive of ignorance and meanness, the humble and sincere follow-

ers of Jesus. Our Apostle, in order more clearly to condemn the wicked Jew on his own principles, thus continues his address in that stile of arrogance and boasting which he appears to have used respecting himself and his brethren : “Thou takest upon thyself to be a guide of the blind, a light to them that are in darkness, an instructor of the ignorant, a teacher of babes.” By the *blind*, *them* that are *in darkness*, the *ignorant* and *babes*, we are then to understand the body of the Apostolic converts, who in general were poor, obscure, and illiterate. For these the deceivers proposed themselves to be *guides* and a *light*, to be *instructors* and *teachers*. But though the Jew, here accosted, pretended to be superior to others, and qualified to teach them the excellent things of the law, yet he neglected to teach himself in the most important points of it. He violated the plainest principles of chastity and decency, was guilty of stealing, and defrauding the temple of Jerusalem of the rich presents given by Paulina, though perhaps he affected to abhor the Pagan idols, and endeavoured, and that in many instances with success, to throw them down at Rome. These characteristic crimes Paul brings to his charge, and thus convicts him as it were from his own mouth. “Dost thou, who teachest another, neglect to teach thyself? Dost thou, who preachest against stealing, steal thyself? Dost thou, who forbiddest adultery, commit adultery? Dost thou abhor idols, and yet profanely rob the temple?” 21, 22.

The conduct of these men in seducing Paulina, bore much resemblance to that of David in respect to the wife of Uriah. The object, which both parties had in view, was the same. It was effected in each instance,

by artful and clandestine means. The deed, which David committed, *gave great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.* The consequence of the deed, in the commission of which the wicked Jew concurred, was very similar. This crime, with the others, of which he and his associates were guilty, furnished the Gentiles with a pretext for vilifying the God of Israel, and accusing indiscriminately all, who believed in Jesus, of similar enormities. These striking coincidences brought to the mind of Paul the story of David, while now addressing that man. With great skill and gentleness he leads him to reflect upon, and confess his own guilt, by directing his attention to one that was criminal in the same way, and whose crime produced the same bad effects. "Dost thou glory in the law, and by the transgression of the law dishonour God? For the name of God is evil spoken of through you among the Gentiles, as it is written." They are the words of Nathan addressed to the Royal Offender, on the occasion above alluded to. See II Sam. xii. 14. Paul then thus continues his address to the judaizing Zealots: "For truly circumcision is of use, if thou perform the law; but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is no better than uncircumcision. If, therefore, the uncircumcised man keep the righteous precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? And will not he that is born to uncircumcision, if he fulfil the law, condemn thee, who hast a written rule of circumcision, and yet transgresses the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and that is circumcision which is a circumcision of the heart, in the figurative, not in the literal sense: whose praise

is not from men, but from God." 25—29. The plain and rational meaning, which our author here enforces, is opposed to an opinion maintained by the Pharisaical teachers, that the rite of circumcision with other forms of the law, constituted the grounds of acceptance with God; and that consequently no Gentile, though a convert to the Gospel, if he continued uncircumcised, had any title to a share in its blessings. The assertion, that he is not a Jew who is so only in outward appearance; and that circumcision, if literally practised, instead of being considered as a symbol of reformation in the heart, confers no advantage, led our author to put in the mouth of his opponents the following objections.

CHAP. III. "What, then, is the advantage of the Jews? and what the benefit of circumcision!" To these he replies, "Much every way, and chiefly, because the oracles of God were confirmed unto them by proof." 1, 2. This reply contains two propositions: one, that the oracles of God were communicated to the Jews; the other, that the truth or divinity of those oracles was confirmed by adequate proof. The object which Paul had in enforcing these propositions will be seen, if you look back to Vol. I. p. 272, where it is shewn that the philologers, among whom ranked the men addressed in the preceding chapter, forged certain predictions, which they ascribed to the *Sibyl*, respecting Jesus Christ. The forgery instigated Tiberius to examine into the merits of the Sibylline oracles, some of which, we are told, he caused to be burned*. This necessa-

* Justin Martyr, in his greater Apology, connects the Sibylline oracles with the prophetic writings; and asserts that certain men, impelled by evil demons, prohibited the use of them under the penalty of death. The following are his own words; Κατὰ δὲ τῶν φαυλῶν δαιμονίων θάνατος ὤρισθη κατὰ τῶν τὰς Σιβυλλῆς ἢ τῶν προφητῶν βιβ-

rily gave rise to a curious and important question, which has often been agitated, whether the pretended prophets of the heathens were in reality ever inspired by the Spirit of God respecting the expected Messiah, or any other subject of his revealed will? To this question the Great Apostle of the Gentiles refers, and he virtually decides it in the negative. "To them (that is, to the Jews,) the oracles of God were entrusted," or, "to them the oracles of God were confirmed by proof." Which, it appears to me, is to this purpose; "Though the learned among the heathens, and even some pretended believers in the Gospel, deny the Jewish writings to be the effect of divine interposition, yet the oracles of Moses and the predictions of the prophets most assuredly proceeded from the inspiration of God, who intrusted them to the Jewish nation, as a sacred deposit of his Will, stamped with evidences of authenticity which demand the assent of every candid enquirer. But no such trust has ever been committed to any of the Pagan teachers. Those prophecies therefore, ascribed to the Sibyl, respecting the Messiah, or

λους ἀναγγιλωσκοντων, Chap. lix. He refers no doubt to the measures adopted on this occasion by Tiberius. And this reference is a clear proof of Justin's knowledge, that the first specimen of the Christian oracles, ascribed to the Sibyl, was the fabrication of the Gnostic teachers in Rome. It also serves to account for a remarkable difference subsisting between the Apology and his Exhortation to the Greeks. In a book addressed to the Emperor and Senate, common decency, if no regard to truth, must have restrained him from citing *oracles*, the forgery of which, a few years before had been publicly detected, and the authors signally punished. But he felt no such restraints in addressing a people, who in general must have been strangers to those facts. Accordingly, Justin Martyr cites none of the Sibylline oracles in either of the two *Apologies*; whereas, in his address to the Greeks, he pours them forth, with other forged verses, in great abundance.

the future destination of mankind, are the oracles not of God, but of men, as they bear those evident marks of imposture which render them unworthy of an honest and rational belief."

The reason, by which the impostors affected to justify themselves in fabricating false oracles, seems to have been this, that the Gentile unbelievers would not acknowledge the sacred penmen of Judea to have been divinely inspired. The invalidity of this excuse, Paul proceeds to expose. "For what, if some were not convinced, shall their unbelief destroy the credibility of God?" Which is as though he had said: "Admitting that some men, through prejudice and ignorance, discredit the true oracles, does that justify you in framing false ones, better adapted to their conception? Or are the promises of God contained in the Jewish scriptures rendered ineffectual, or unworthy of credit, because they are, and will be for a time, disbelieved by false and wicked men?" These queries he answers, "By no means; rather let God be true, and every man a liar." 4; that is, "Every man who denies the truth of God, or who puts what is false into His mouth, ought rather than God to be charged with falsehood." He then gives him a very good reason, why he should not tell a falsehood, even under the specious pretext of promoting the truth. "That thou mightest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art called to an account." * The oracles, which those deceivers had

* The guilt which David incurred respecting the wife of Uriah, he thus confesses, Ps. li. 4. *Against thee the only one have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* The man whom the Apostle now addresses committed a similar crime; and the similarity seems to have been the circumstance, which by association directed the writer to the above passage of the Psalmist. His advice to the impostors is to confess the truth;

fabricated concerning Christ, and the veil under which they affected to conceal the meanness and obscurity of his birth, by representing him as supernaturally conceived, contributed at first, we may reasonably suppose, to promote the Gospel in Rome and in the provinces. The plausible end, thus answered by their falsehoods, the authors, naturally enough, produced in apology for their guilt. Accordingly the Apostle represents the person, whom he is addressing, as replying. "If the truth of God (the true Gospel of God) prevailed by my falsehood unto his glory, why am I then condemned as a sinner?" 7. Their conduct, notwithstanding this plea, was highly criminal: and they signally received the punishment due to their crimes; some of them being put to death, whilst the rest were banished from the country. The sufferings, which they thus underwent, their virtuous opponents could not fail to consider, and exhibit, as a sure sign of God's anger at their guilt. Paul with much address leads the apologising impostor to notice the penalty, which he and his associates incurred, in this light. "But what shall we say, If our unrighteousness recommend the righteousness of God, (the Gospel of God) is not God unjust for inflicting punishment?" 5. That our author might not be misunderstood as to the punishment which he had in view, he inserts the clause,

and to avoid the use of words characterised by duplicity and fraud; since those very words, when properly interpreted, criminated their base authors. Hence the meaning of Paul when he says, *That thou mightest be justified by thy words*, that is, Thou shalt be tried by thy own words: if true, thou shalt be acquitted; but if false, condemned. The Apostle here seems to assert, what Jesus himself declared to those Pharisees, who, he foresaw, would favour the Gnostic imposture; namely, that they would be tried and condemned, upon no other principles than their own. See Vol. ii. p. 538.

κατ' ἀνθρώπον λεγῶ, *I speak in respect to (the punishment inflicted by) a man, namely Tiberius.*

That it is lawful to tell falsehood for promoting truth, or more generally, to do evil that good may come, was a principle interwoven with all the systems of policy and religion which obtained in the heathen world. The priest delivered his doctrines in words of studied ambiguity, to which he attached a signification very different from the popular sense. The legislator and the magistrate sought to govern the people by inculcating the doctrine of a future state, which in their hearts they disbelieved. Even the philosopher, who boasted in the love and investigation of truth, had his *Isoteric* and *Exoteric* writings, or books penned with such artful duplicity, as to contain an internal meaning opposite to their obvious and literal interpretation. And it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that no individual among the Pagans, however distinguished in other respects, rose so high in moral refinement as to express his disapprobation of a maxim so dangerous and dishonourable. From the school of human wisdom, the first Gnostics * imported it with other corrupt lessons into

* Hence Tertullian says with justice of the false teachers, that there was nothing of which they were so careful, as to conceal from the multitude the meaning of the doctrines which they preached: *Nihil magis curant quam occultare quod prædicant*, p. 250. The Pagan priests guarded their mysteries or internal doctrines with equal care from the popular eye. Their maxim was that of Porphyry,

Φθεγξομαι οἷς θεμις, Δυρας επιθεσθε βεβηλοῖς,

or that of the Latin poet,

Odi profanum volgus et arceo.

Some of the Pagan writers had the frankness to confess, that they taught falsehoods to the people; and they attempted to justify this under the

the Church of Christ, and attempted to justify its adoption by the useful purposes which it answered. The Apostle represents the impostor before him, as proposing a question in his defence upon the above principle, "Is not God unjust for inflicting punishment?" To which he returns an answer truly glorious, and highly characteristic of a religion originating in the wisdom of heaven. "By no means: for then how shall God judge the world?" The purport of which is this: "Since the Almighty condemns the arts of deception, which men of the world use in support of their systems, he will necessarily condemn the same in you, whatever may be your pretext for employing them. To suppose that he will punish fraud and duplicity in one case, and not in another, however plausible may be their object, is dishonourable to the character, and inconsistent with the equity of God. He does not, he cannot approve in the supporters of the Gospel, what he condemns in the world." The Apostle next subjoins, "Say not, (as some maliciously affirm that we say) we should do evil that good may come." 8. Paul, with the virtuous followers of Jesus in general, could not but approve of the sentence, which Tiberius pronounced on the seducers of Paulina, and of the edict which he published to punish those who by a

plea of *utility*. Scævola, the Roman Pontiff, boldly maintained that it was expedient to deceive the state in matters of religion; and Varro before him, as we are informed by Augustin, has declared that there are many things which, though true, are not expedient for the people to know; and many things, though false, it is yet useful for them to deem true. The heathen philosophers readily adopted, and openly acted upon this pernicious principle. For their guilt in thus humouring, instead of correcting, the prejudices and false notions of the people, they are severely reprehended by some of the later fathers.

similar behaviour disturbed the public peace in the provinces. To the equity of these measures, our author thus bears his unequivocal testimony, THEIR CONDEMNATION IS JUST.

His Jewish readers, Paul was well aware, would be shocked and offended at expressing his approbation of measures, the severity of which had been heavily felt by their own nation; and though they might allow that many of the Egyptians deserved their fate, yet the hardships, which the Jews underwent, they must have deemed unjust. In order to justify his approbation, he represents them thus retorting, "What then? We are better than they."—"Allowing that the Egyptian priests, who have been put to death, and the magicians who were banished, underwent a just punishment, this does not justify the sufferings to which we Jews have been exposed, as we are free from their vices, and enjoy privileges above others." This objection, supposed to be urged by the judaizing teachers, Paul silences by reminding them, that he had already shewn the Jews, no less than the Gentiles, to be guilty of the grossest immoralities. "By no means (are we better than others); for we have brought the charge of guilt against all, both Jews and Gentiles." He refers to the first chapter of this Epistle, where he charges the wicked Jew and his associates with all the vices which debased the Pagan idolaters. That they might the more deeply feel the justice of this accusation, he places before the eyes of those men passages in the prophetic writings, which were most descriptive of their vices, and which from their appropriation, might appear to have a prospective view to themselves: "As it is written: there is none righteous (neither Jew nor Gentile) no not one; there

is none that hath understanding, there is none that diligently seeketh God. They have all turned aside; they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; they have deceived with their tongues; poison of asps is under their lips, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; straitness and distress are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." 10—19.

These passages are selected by the Apostle, as descriptive of the character which the Zealots sustained, and not, as some erroneously suppose, of what mankind in general then were. Of those, whether Jews or Egyptians, who first taught the Gnostic system, it might be said with truth, none was righteous, all were unprofitable. Though some of them might pretend to unfold the wisdom of the Mosaic law, they were without understanding. Being worshippers of the serpent, and making it the object of their imitation, they deceived with their tongues, and had the poison of asps under their lips. As they were exposed, on one hand, by the faithful believer, and punished on the other, by the Roman government, their mouth was full of cursing and bitterness. Finally, Being actuated by a sanguinary and vindictive temper, they swiftly directed their feet to the shedding of blood; and as they vilified the Creator of the world, the fear of him was not before their eyes.*

* If we duly examine these citations, in connection with the men to whom they were immediately applied, we cannot avoid being struck with the pertinence of their application, and with the skill, meekness and candour of the writer. The Gnostics pretended to have found out

Lest the Jewish converts should flatter themselves, that this description was more appropriate to their Gentile brethren than to themselves, the Apostle informs

a Supreme God hitherto unknown. Their object, however, by this pretension, was to undermine the belief, and to obliterate the reverence which were generally cherished by the Jews, at least, for the Creator of the world, and artfully to introduce and establish the atheistic notions of Epicurus, whose followers in reality they were, see Vol. ii. p. 252—258. This feature induced the Apostle to direct their attention to Psal. xiv; where it is said, that men of this description in their hearts believed not in God; that, being workers of abomination, they did not really seek, much less reveal, the unknown Deity; that, as they were corrupt and debased by impurities, they were without understanding to comprehend him. Our Apostle next quotes a passage descriptive of them, as the authors of falsehoods, which they propagated *with open mouth*, without disguise, shame, or compunction; as the advocates of the serpent, whose venom they had imbibed (Vol. ii. p. 539;) as men putting on the appearance of *friendship* and *gentleness*, in order to deceive and devour; see also pages 545, 546. This is taken from Psalm the fifth. There is one thing in this place to be observed, which reflects great honour on the temper and feelings of the Apostle Paul. The Psalmist having said of his enemies, (meaning probably those in the court of Saul,) “There is no faithfulness in their mouth, their inward part is very wickedness, their throat is an open sepulchre, they flatter with their tongue,” then adds, *Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels: cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, for they have rebelled against thee.* Now this last verse was very characteristic of the Jewish Gnostics, who, educated in the Egyptian school, apostatised, both in principle and in conduct, from the law of Moses, and who, in consequence, blasphemed Jehovah as an inferior and evil Being, Vol. ii. p. 353, 356, yet our amiable author declined to cite it. His reason doubtless was, that it breathes a spirit repugnant both to the temper of Christianity, and to the character of its founder. This is one of those latent instances, which prove when unfolded, that the great Apostle of the Gentiles was actuated by feelings the most opposite to those, which necessarily would have influenced him, had he been either an enthusiast or an impostor. Finally, In order to describe the turbulent and vexatious temper, which marked the deceivers, together with the misery and destruction which they brought upon their deluded, but innocent followers, the Apostle borrows the language of

them, that it included the Jews as well as the Gentiles. "Now we know that the words of the law are spoken to them who are under the law, so that every mouth must be stopped, and all the world be subject to the judgment of God," 19. The anti-apostolic teachers, though grossly immoral, yet supposed that, because they ranked among the chosen people of God, and kept the rites of the law, or, to use their own language, performed the works of the law, they should obtain salvation. This dangerous notion Paul next refutes in direct and decisive terms. "By the works of the law no man will be accepted in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." In opposition to it, he inculcates faith in Christ, without ceremonial observances, as the means of acceptance with God.

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifest unto all, * being attested by the law

Isaiah, where he ascribes similar qualities to men of his own time, Chap. lix. 7, 8. Before I close this note, permit me to illustrate the address which Paul here displays, by an example taken from the history of John the Baptist. When the Priests and the Levites put to him the question, "Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, MAKE STRAIT THE WAY OF THE LORD, AS SAID THE PROPHET ISAIAS." Now the men, to whom this reply was made, ranked among the Pharisaical teachers, whose characteristic it was, that they *perverted* that very way which they professed to teach. And this is what the Evangelist meant to convey, when with apparent abruptness he remarks, *And they, which were sent, were of the Pharisees*, John, Chap. i. 23, 24.

* The clause *εις παντας*, or *επι παντας*, is thought by some to be superfluous. For this reason, Mr. Wakefield deems one of them an interpolation. But it appears to me that *εις παντας* has a reference to *πεφανερωται* in the preceding verse: and the meaning of the writer is, that the righteousness of God is displayed *unto all*, and extended *to all*.

and the prophets, even the righteousness of God, which is, by faith in Jesus Christ, upon all that believe (for there is no distinction, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God), being freely acquitted by his favour, through that purification which is in Christ Jesus : whom God hath set forth a mercy-seat through faith in his blood, to display his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, for the display, through extraordinary forbearance,* of his righteousness in the present time, so that he is himself just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

21—27.

This passage must appear to every reader very obscure and involved. But a few observations will, I trust, render it plain and simple. In the first place, it is to be observed, that our author stiles the terms of salvation, proposed in the Gospel, in opposition to those rites and ceremonies urged by the false teachers, *the righteousness of God* ; † which implies that the Almighty, having promised eternal life to his servants of old, now displayed his *justice* in the fulfilment of it,

* The clause *ἐν ἀνοχῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, I have rendered *through extraordinary forbearance*. So Mr. Wakefield renders *δυναμὶς Θεοῦ* a *divine or extraordinary power*, Chap. i. 16. This idiom of the Hebrew tongue is illustrated by a variety of examples in Wilson's Grammar, p. 102. The persons described in Genesis, Chap. vi. 2. *as sons of God*, mean probably *giants*, or men distinguished by longevity and other corporeal qualities.

† Our author, in Chap. i. 17. calls the Gospel, or the hope of pardon and immortality which it unfolds, by the same name. He there refers to the prophetic writings as containing the promise of these blessings. Hence Ambrose, in his comment on the place, writes, *Justitia Dei est, quia, quod promisit, dedit*. Similar to this is the explanation given also by Locke.

by the mission of his Son Jesus Christ. That this was the meaning of our author may be inferred from the declaration, that *the righteousness of God is attested by the law and the prophets*, that is, the Gospel of God, or the mercy of God therein contained, being predicted in the Jewish Scriptures, is confirmed by the testimony thence alleged in its support.

The Gnostic teachers enjoined on their disciples schemes of purification numerous and various, as were the individuals of which they were composed.* Those purifications consisted of some species of ablution or baptism, or in the use of some mystic phrases, or in the belief of a religious creed opposed to the Apostolic faith, see Vol. ii. p. 564. One article of this creed was, that the divinity dwelling in Jesus, and not Jesus himself, constituted the Christ. This was a mere subterfuge for undermining the great doctrines of the Saviour's death and subsequent resurrection, as the basis of a new life to mankind, and also for avoiding the disgrace of acknowledging a crucified Lord. The Apostolic teachers too, enjoined the necessity of purification. But they meant merely that expurgation of the character from vicious habits, that ablution of the heart from all former impurities, which the new views and sublime motives, unfolded in the Gospel, were calculated to effect.* This truly rational purifi-

* *Οσοι ταυτης της γνωμης μυσαγωγοι, τοςαυται απολυτρωσις.*
They are the words of Irenæus. p. 88.

† The term *απολυτρωσις*, which in our translation is rendered *Redemption*, signifies, in a literal sense, the washing of the body, in a metaphorical, the purifying of the mind. Hence it was applied to denote a deliverance from the penal consequences, or the bondage, of sin by repentance and reformation. The term came in vogue, though in a very

cation Paul here inculcates on the Roman converts, in contradistinction to that practised by their deceivers.

different signification, among the Jewish Gnostics, in reference to whom Paul always uses it: and he generally means by it, the cleansing of the heart, in consequence of a practical faith in Jesus, from those impurities which debased the impostors. In proof of this assertion, permit me to produce a few examples. Speaking of those who boasted in their supposed prerogatives, he thus writes, 1 Cor. Chap. i. 29. "Of whom ye are in Christ Jesus—righteousness, holiness, and *purification*; which last term is happily explained by a parallel word in Chap. vi. 11. "Know ye not, that the unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not deceive yourselves: neither fornicators, nor worshippers of images, nor adulterers, nor impure abusers of themselves, nor thieves, nor extortioners, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor rapacious, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. BUT YE HAVE WASHEN YOURSELVES, but ye are become holy, but ye are made righteous, by the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Here you will observe the three terms, *purification*, *holiness* and *righteousness*, in the first instance, are paralleled, in the second, by the three verbs, *ye have washen yourselves*, *ye are become holy*, *ye are made righteous*. The purification of the true Christian, therefore, was the washing of himself from all iniquities, in the pure fountain of divine truth opened by Jesus Christ. Again, Ephes. Chap. i. 7. the same Apostle writes, "In whom we have the *purification*, through his blood or death." He then inserts a clause in explanation of what he meant by this, "The *dismissal* of our sins." The purification then attained by the blood of Jesus, figuratively speaking, is the washing away, or, without a figure, the setting aside of sins. He uses the term again, Col. i. 14. and annexes to it the same explanatory clause. But, as the washing away of sin is the only means of being delivered from its domineering influence, or penal effect, *απολυτρωσις* came hence to signify *deliverance*: and as sin, in the estimation of a Jew, was the cause of all evil, natural and moral, it is often applied to denote *emancipation* from any species of evil. Instances, where it is thus used, occur, Luke xxi. 28. Rom. viii. 23. Ephes. iv. 30. Heb. xi. 35. The term, I have observed, came in vogue among the Gnostics. The meaning, which some of them annexed to it, bears a close affinity to the signification, which it has in the writings of the Apostle Paul, namely, repentance and reformation. Now the grounds of these were the new views displayed by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Such views respecting the character and government of God, and the final desti-

“ Being pardoned freely, through his favour, by that *purification* which is in Christ JESUS,” 24. Here he leads them to infer, that the purification recommended by the Apostolic authority, consisted in embracing the man Jesus as the Christ, and in cultivating those virtues which he prescribed and exemplified. Observe, the Apostle, in order to direct his language the more pointedly against those, who separated between Jesus and the Christ, makes the former prominent and emphatic by putting it the last. For the same reason, in verse 26, he mentions Jesus alone, as the object of faith to that believer who is accepted with God. See Vol. ii. p. 260—264.

The impostors, having denied the humanity of the Saviour, denied in consequence the reality of his suffering and restoration again to life. To the former of these events, our author next invites the attention of his readers. The righteousness and mercy of God he represents as set forth *by faith in his blood*, that is, in his *death*.* By which he signifies that the crucifixion

nation of mankind, emanated from the divine wisdom in the person of Jesus, or from the Holy Spirit effused through him on the Apostles. Hence, seemingly, the Gnostics employed the term to signify *Wisdom*, *Intelligence*, or the *Holy Spirit*, called also the *Superiour Mother*. And this they considered as the foundation of *purification*, or *deliverance*. See Iren. p. 88. note 3.

* The Apostle uses the term *blood* in preference to that of death, because it is more comprehensive. The Egyptian Gnostics denied that Christ, as being a God in the mere form of a man, had any *flesh* and *blood*, (John i. Epis. iv. 2.) The contrary of this our author inculcates, and he insinuates, that he not only possessed flesh and blood, but that he really shed his blood on the cross. Wherever therefore Paul speaks of the blood of Jesus, we are to understand him, as maintaining the real humanity and suffering of the Messiah, in opposition to those im-

of Jesus, being an event previously requisite to his resurrection, should be regarded as the only solid foundation of a rational faith in that future state of retribution, which, when realized, shall rectify the present disorders under the divine government, and if anticipated, furnish motives the most powerful to repentance and reformation. The anti-apostolic teachers naturally enough insisted on the cruel and ignominious death, to which Jesus submitted, and which, according to his own declaration, was enjoined upon him by his Father's command, (John, Chap. x. 18. xiv. 31.) as a striking proof of that cruelty and injustice, ascribed by them to the Creator. To preclude this specious argument, Paul exhibits his expiration on the cross, however unjust and disgraceful in the sight of men, under the figure of a *throne*, on which the Almighty is seated, arrayed in mercy, and dispensing the hope of immortality and the pardon of their sins to all true believers; "Whom God hath set forth to be A MERCY-SEAT,* through faith in his death."

postors who rejected these notions. See Acts xxi. 28. with the explanation, Vol. ii. p. 558. It has been observed, that the Saviour himself, anticipating the fictions of the deceivers, appointed the bread and the wine, at his last supper, to be the visible symbols of his body and his death, Vol. ii. p. 428.

* See *Taylor's* excellent note on this place, where he shews that *ἰλασμενίου*, which our translators render *propitiation*, ought to have been translated *mercy-seat*, as it is done in all other places. He then presently adds; "Nor can I conceive what the end and use of it (of the mercy-seat) could be, unless it was to denote, that from thence the mercy of God was dispensed to the people, and that he took his standing, as it were, upon that, in all his transactions with them, to shew that mercy and goodness were his Throne, the ground and basis of that intercourse which he held with the children of Israel; and that all their services, prayers, and devotions were to have respect to that, or to God, as seated upon a Throne of Mercy."

The suffering of the Messiah was not only foretold by the prophets, but also presignified by certain rites and sacrifices instituted by Moses. This circumstance amongst others induced the men, who denied the reality of that event, to reject the law and the prophets, and refer them to a God different from the author of the Gospel. In reference, seemingly, to this false notion, Paul mentions the Mercy-seat or cover of the Ark of the covenant, which was the appointed symbol of the divine clemency, as bearing a symbolical and prophetic reference to the death of Jesus; an event that exhibits, in the clearest light, the tender regard and compassion which God cherishes towards his human offspring. "Whom God hath set forth a Mercy-seat through faith in his death, to display his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, for the display, through extraordinary forbearance, of his righteousness in the present time." Which may be thus paraphrased: "The Almighty appointed in former ages a Mercy-seat to be erected as a demonstration, that he was merciful and ready to forgive the sins of his people. This being a type or figure of that compassion, which he had displayed towards the human race in the gift of his Son, received its real and complete signification in his death on the cross; which, having laid the surest foundation for the hope of a future life, affords the most striking manifestation of the benevolence of God. Those, therefore, who believe that Christ really suffered, and assent to the fair inference thence to be drawn, in connection with his resurrection, respecting a new state of existence, and act under the influence of this belief, shall, in the present time, receive the

pardon of their sins, in the same manner as the Jews of old were pardoned, when with influential faith they looked to the symbol of the divine benignity upon the Ark of the covenant.”

The Gnostic teachers represented the God of the Jews as being evil and unjust. Of the arguments by which they endeavoured to substantiate this charge, and of the reply that was made by the sincere believers, the author of the spurious work, entitled *The Recognitions*, presents us with a statement, which, if attended to, throws much light on one part of the above obscure passage. Simon, in order to prove that the Creator is unjust, asserts two things: one, that “Many of those, who act well, perish in misery, while they, who act impiously, finish a long life in happiness;”* the other, that there is no future state of retribution: for “When men die, the soul perishes equally with the body.” The first of these, Peter his illustrious opponent advances no less than Simon, and hence argues for the necessity of a future retribution, in order to vindicate the righteousness of God. Now, Paul insists on just the converse of this proposition against those, who, in the church of Rome, supported the Samaritan system.

* Et Simon ait: hoc utique est quod nos incredulos facit, quia multi bene agentes male percunt; et rursum impie agentes longi temporis cum beatitudine vitam finiunt.—Simul et mortui fuerint, etiam anima pariter extinguetur. Peter thus addresses his opponent: Audi, inquit, nonnulli homines Deum blasphemantes, et omnem vitam suam in injustitia voluptate ducentes, in lectulis suis defuncti sunt, consecuti finem vitæ inter suos, et honorabilem sepulturam; alii vero Deum colentes, et cum omni justitia et sobrietate vitam suam in parsimonia conservantes, pro justitiæ observantia in desertis interiire, ita ut ne sepultura quidem haberentur digni. Ubi est ergo justitia Dei, si anima immortalis non est; quæ vel si impie egerit, pœnas in futuro, vel si pie et juste, præmia consequatur. *Recog. Lib. iii. 40.*

God, having set forth Jesus Christ as a Mercy-seat by faith in his death, and thus displayed *his righteousness*, is hence said by him to be “himself just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.” By which we are to understand, that the death of Christ, connected with his subsequent resurrection from the dead, having established the certainty of a future state, in which the Supreme Being will vindicate his apparently partial administration of justice by a more adequate distribution of rewards and punishments, proves him to be merciful, just, and good, and the dispenser of mercy, justice, and goodness to the true believer; and therefore removes those plausible objections urged by the blasphemers against his government and moral attributes.*

* This conclusion of the Apostle throws much light, I conceive, upon an otherwise obscure language, which Jesus once used in the near prospect of his death and resurrection. John xvi. 8, 9. “The comforter will come and convince the world of *righteousness*—because I go to the Father.” As if he had said; “The effusion of the Holy Spirit upon you, will, by confirming your testimony to my resurrection and ascension, and by that means establishing the certainty of a future state, convince the world that God is *righteous*—that he is not indifferent to the virtues and vices of mankind, but, while he now notices them, will hereafter reward the one and punish the other by a more complete administration of justice. The term *righteousness*, here used by our Lord, and in the text by the Apostle, is employed in the most comprehensive signification, and denotes mercy, benignity, goodness, as well as the principle of mere justice or equity. Instances often occur where it is used in the same extensive acceptation, “Except your *righteousness* exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Mat. v. 20. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his *righteousness*, and all these things shall (over and above) be added unto you,” Mat. vi. 33. The adjective *righteous*, (*δικαιος*) also is very frequently applied to qualify a character that is completely virtuous. See Prov. iv. 18. Mat. xiii. 43. The Apostle Peter employs it on one occasion to express the broad and perfect virtue

Among the many odious qualities which characterized the Gnostic teachers, one of the most conspicuous was *spiritual pride*. Their aspiring temper prompted them to exult in the fancied privileges which they enjoyed; in their scrupulous adherence to the rites of the law, and in the favour of God exclusively confined to themselves. Paul, in the next place, indirectly accuses them of undue arrogance in these respects; and by way of inference from the preceding reasoning, shews they had mistaken the only just ground of confidence towards God, which was a practical faith in the Christian Doctrine. "Where then is your BOASTING? It is excluded. By what law (may it then be admitted)?* By the law of works? No; by the law of faith. We

of Christ himself, Acts iii. 14. The Gnostic teachers, indeed, made a distinction between *justice* and *goodness*: mistaking the proper end of punishment they maintained that, if God was strictly just, he could not be good. In this however they were opposed by the Catholic writers. Clement Alexandrinus and Theodoret have written distinct chapters on this subject. Pæd. Lib. 1. Cap. 8. Hær. Fab. Com. Lib. v. 16. Cicero, though he considers justice as consisting in not injuring the persons and properties of men in the social state, ascribes to it a lustre beyond all the other virtues. *Justitia, in qua virtutis splendor est maximus.* De Off. Lib. 1. 7. From the exercise of this, he tells us, Men received the appellation of *good*. It was for this reason, perhaps, that *candidates* for offices in the state, had this name given them by their clients. *Omnes candidatos bonos viros dicimus*; Seneca, Epis. 7. The young ruler, who in common with the Jews supposed the office of the Messiah to be of a temporal nature, must have necessarily regarded Jesus as a candidate of this kind. And this, it may be, was his chief reason for stiling him good, Mat. xix. 16.

* The clause *May it then be admitted* is not in the original but implied. Some such expression is obviously necessary to make the sense complete. Instances are to be met with in all authors, where the context requires the insertion of a phrase conveying a signification opposite to that which is before asserted. Thus, in Genesis viii. 7, we read "And he sent forth a raven which (did not return but) went forth to and fro, until the waters dried up from off the earth."

infer, therefore, that man is justified by faith without the works of the law," 27—30, which is to the following effect; "Pride not yourselves in ritual works, because, so far from being adequate to produce repentance and reformation, they co-exist with the grossest vices in the character of their votaries. The most effectual mean to answer this end is a firm belief in the divine mission of Jesus Christ. For this

The clause *Did not return* is not in the original text. The writer, as being very manifestly implied, left it to be supplied by the reader. It is however expressed in the Septuagint version, and from thence adopted in Geddes's Translation. Again, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision, but the observance of God's commandment," 1 Cor. vii. 19. Here *is alone of value*, or some such expression, must be supplied. Accept, moreover, the following example from Virgil Geor. Lib. i. 440.

——Solem certissima signa sequuntur,
Et quæ mane refert, et quæ surgentibus astris.

It is plain, that a verb opposite in sense to *refert* (such as *aufert*) must be supplied in the last clause before *surgentibus astris*. Permit me to produce one instance more: the following are the words of Orestes, addressing the paternal Gods on his return home to avenge the death of his father,

Και μη μ' ατιμον τηςδ' αποσειλητε γης,
Αλλα αρχεπλουτον, και κατασατην δομων.

Soph. Ηλεκ. 71, 72.

The verb *αποσειλητε*, in the first, is not applicable to the second line, which requires the insertion of another verb, bearing an opposite signification. And here I cannot refrain from correcting a very glaring error, which has crept into the context in which the above lines stand.

Ὡς καμ' επαυχω της δε της φημης απο,
ΔΕΔΥΚΟΤ' εχθροισ, ως ασρον, λαμψειν ετι.

The common reading is *δεδοκωτα*, which not only obscures the beauty of the figure, but is scarcely susceptible of any meaning. The allusion to a star, after setting, again appearing above the horizon is beautiful. I were easy to illustrate it by parallel cases.

reason we infallibly conclude, that this is the true way of securing the Divine approbation." The Pharisees vainly supposed, that what constituted them the Children of Abraham and the favourite people of God, was the rite of circumcision enjoined on that Patriarch, in token of the covenant made with him. To this error the preacher of righteousness alludes; and he suggests the necessity of a change both in sentiments and in conduct, to prevent their being cut off the stem of Abraham, and others being engrafted in their room, Mat. iii. 9, 10. The prevalence of it, among those whom Jesus addressed, demanded, on one occasion in the course of his ministry, his particular animadversion, in which he assures them, that acting as Abraham had done alone formed a just claim to the privilege of being his seed, and of having God for their father, John chap. viii. The Apostle Paul in this place enforces the same lesson. Having shewn that the rite of circumcision did not recommend them to God, he insinuates that all, Gentiles as well as Jews, have a share in his favour, if they receive and obey the Gospel. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Nay, he is of the Gentiles also: Inasmuch as God is *One* who will acquit by means of faith, the circumcised and the uncircumcised that believe."* 29, 30.

* The verse in the original should thus be punctuated. *Επειπερ εις ο θεος, ος δικαιωσει περιτομην εκ πισεως, και ακροβυσιαν, δια της πισεως.* The phrase *εκ πισεως* is to be taken with *ακροβυσιαν*, as well as with *περιτομην*; and the use of it is to express the Hebrew and Gentile believer, in contradistinction to those who were not believers. The article before *πισεως*, in the last clause, denotes *faith* as the means of salvation, in opposition to the works of the law insisted upon by the Heretics. In construction it is to be connected with *δικαιωσει*. Observe, the Apostle here maintains the unity of God. The Gnostics taught that the God of Israel was different from Him

Seeing the necessity of ceremonial works thus superseded by the principle of faith, the Zealots were ready to ask of what advantage did circumcision prove to the Patriarch Abraham, upon whom it was first enjoined. In reply to this question, the Apostle maintains that Abraham had no reason for boasting in God on the score of works, inasmuch as righteousness was imputed to him by trusting in the promise, 1—6 ; that the blessedness, celebrated by the Royal Psalmist* as belonging to those whose sins are forgiven, extends no less to the uncircumcised than the circumcised believer, since it was pronounced upon Abraham, while he was yet in a state of uncircumcision, 6—11 ; that he received circumcision not as the condition of forgiveness, but as a *sign* that he was forgiven, and as a *seal* that the same forgiveness would be conferred upon every person exercising faith in the uncircumcised state ; that he hence became the father of all true be- who imparted the blessings of the Gospel to mankind. Paul on the contrary asserts, that the God who saves the Gentile and the Jew is ONE.

* The words of David, quoted by our Apostle, are the following. “ Happy they, whose iniquities have been forgiven, and whose sins blotted out ! Happy the man, unto whom the Lord will not impute sin.” Now our author understood these verses as declaring the happiness of that man unto whom God imputed righteousness *independent* of, or *without works*. But it does not appear that such a declaration is implied in them. If, however, you turn to the thirty second Psalm, whence they are taken, it will appear to have been composed in reference to certain men who, though guilty in their hearts, rested in ceremonial works as the means of being accepted of God. The Apostle, understanding this to be the general object which the royal author had in view, very properly cites his authority, when now maintaining, in opposition to the Zealots, that a practical faith in the Gospel, and not external performances, opened the sure and solid way to the divine acceptance.

lievers, and that those who practised the rite of circumcision, as well as they who did not practise it, inherited, through him as their father and pattern, the privilege of divine pardon, 11—12. The promulgation of the law took place a long time after the promise was made to Abraham, that he should be the heir of the world. It could not, therefore, have been the condition upon which that promise was settled, nor the mean by which it should be fulfilled; and if those under the law, those who practised and rested in ceremonial observances, urged an exclusive claim to the inheritance, they necessarily subverted the very basis upon which the true title to it was founded, namely, an influential faith that He who gave the promise would also perform it. “For the promise that Abraham should be heir of the world, was not made to him or his race through the medium of the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those under the law are the (true) heirs, faith is rendered ineffectual and the promise destroyed. Therefore, the promise is from faith (that the fulfilment might be deemed not a debt but a favour; see verse 4.) and be realized to all the race of Abraham, not those under the law only, but those also who imitate his faith who is father to us all, in the sight of that God in whom he trusted, Who raiseth the dead to life, and calleth the things that are not as though they were.” 14—17. Observe here, that the writer speaks of those nations which were alienated from God by their sins, as being *dead*; and their restoration to his favour by the purifying influence of faith, he represents as *their resurrection to a new life*. The object of the writer, in using such strong and figurative language, was to prepare his readers, for believing the future renovation of mankind

after death by pointing their attention to an event analogous to it, which, though improbable, was yet accomplished by the Almighty. Paul also glances, it appears to me, at the objection drawn, against the promise made to the Jewish Patriarch, from the length of time which had elapsed before its consummation; and he removes it by insinuating, that all things, however remote in futurity with respect to man, are really present with God: "Who calleth the things that are not, as though they were," or, as the clause might be rendered, "Who calleth those nations his own which are not (yet) his own." The expression is thus modified in chap. xii. 25. See also 1 Cor. i. 28.

Our author in the next place, with the view of confirming the faith of the Roman converts in the great doctrine of a future resurrection from the dead, holds up for their encouragement and imitation the father of the faithful; and he leads them to infer that the raising up of Isaac by the Almighty, conformably to his promise, from parents, that, figuratively speaking, were already dead, presignified, and by that means rendered credible however contrary to antecedent probability, the resurrection of Jesus: "For Abraham, at a time when there was no hope, trusted in the hope of being father to many nations according to that declaration, *Thus will thy race be*. And being weak (in body though) not in faith, he (notwithstanding) regarded neither his own body now become dead, he being an hundred years old, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb. He mistrusted not the promise of God through unbelief, but (while his bodily strength was decaying) he grew mighty in faith, ascribing the merit to God, (and not to himself), being assured that what God promised he is able also to perform. And therefore righteousness

was imputed to him. But this was not written on his account only, but on ours also, to whom the same righteousness will be imputed for believing in Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who delivered himself up for our sins and rose for our acquittal." On this passage, I have only to notice, that the Apostle invites the Roman converts to believe in *Him* that raised Jesus, that is, in the God of Israel, and not in any other, supposed to be greater and more perfect; in *Jesus* whom the adversaries of the true Gospel, though they affected to embrace the Christ within him, rejected. This Jesus he stiles *our Lord*: By which he intimates, that his divine authority is acknowledged and his precepts obeyed by the Apostles, and ought to be so by the believers in Rome. Be it remarked, finally, that the Saviour voluntarily submitting to an ignominious death and rising again for the salvation of mankind, is described under the figure of an advocate, who freely offers his service to persons arraigned at the bar of justice, and after rising to plead their cause procures their acquittal.*

CHAP. V. The Apostle, having demonstrated that faith in Jesus, and not ceremonial works, is the mean of delivering men from sin and its penal effects, proceeds in the two following chapters to describe the fruits of that

* The following verse presents us with the same allusion. "Who is it that condemneth? Christ hath died, or rather is risen in our behalf, Who is at the right hand of God and pleadeth for us?" ROM. VIII. 34. We meet with a similar figure at the end of the first Psalm: "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." By which is intimated that the Supreme Judge, who knoweth the thoughts, will not suffer the sinful to stand up in the day of trial and varnish their guilt with lying eloquence.

faith which he inculcates : and lest his reader should mistake its nature, he represents it as an efficacious principle, prompting its possessors joyfully to submit, for the glorious reward placed before them, to the severest afflictions, rescuing them from the dominion of vice, and consecrating them to the service of God,—to the cultivation of extraordinary virtue and holiness.

“ Being therefore acquitted by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ : through whom we have also introduction by means of faith to this favour in which we stand ; and we exult in the hope of the glory of God.’ —“ Being saved by the reforming influence of faith, we are in friendship with the Almighty through the man Jesus who is the Christ and the Lord of all the true believers. By means of a well founded belief in him and not of rites, we are introduced, as it were, to the immediate presence of the Deity, raised to the privilege of ranking among the disciples of his Son, and of enjoying, as his Apostles, those supernatural endowments, which enable us to maintain our ground against every adversary, and, even in seasons of trial and hardship, to exult in the prospect of a glorious recompence from God.” The Gnostic teachers refused to suffer persecution for supporting the interests of the Gospel which they had espoused, though the duty of submitting to pain and every other personal inconvenience was unequivocally enjoined by the precept and illustrated by the example of Christ himself : And in order to preclude the suspicion of cowardice and insincerity, they derided, as foolish, those who magnanimously complied with the injunction of their Master, and arraigned them as the worshippers of a Being that

delighted in the sufferings of his votaries.* Our author, in allusion seemingly to such false representations, proceeds to justify the faithful believer for sustaining persecution in the cause of christianity; and he represents them glorying in their distresses, in as much as they generated those dispositions and habits of mind, which laid the surest foundation for the hope of reward. "And we exult in our hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we exult also in these afflictions; knowing that affliction produceth patience; and patience, proof; and proof, hope." 3. The recompence to which they looked forward, Paul has already declared (Chap. ii. 7.) to be an incorruptible glory and honour, obtained after a resurrection from the dead proved and illustrated by

* Ad tantam temeritatem progressi sunt quidam, ut etiam martyres spernant, et vituperent eos qui propter Domini confessionem occiduntur. Iren. p. 247. When the hand of persecution set fire to the church of Christ, the impostors, like serpents, crawled forth, as from a bush in flames, and darted their poisonous stings even into those innocent sufferers who were scorched by the heat. This is the impressive image under which they are in one place described by Tertullian. Quum igitur fides æstuat, et Ecclesia exurit de figura rubri, tunc Gnostici erumpunt, tunc Valentiniani proserpunt, tunc omnes martyrorum refragatores ebullunt, callentes et ipsi offendere, figere, occidere. p. 487. Every one, who suffered death rather than give up his faith, was according to them guilty of *suicide*. Φονεα δε' ειναι αυτον εαυτου και αυθεντην, τον δια θανατου ομολογησαντα. Clem. Alex. Vol. I. p. 571. The author of *Political Justice*, it seems, has the very respectable sanction of Simon Magus and his followers, when he says that "martyrs are *suicides* by the very signification of the term," Vol. I. p. 140. This assertion however is paradoxical and very unworthy of a philosophical writer. In strict propriety a *suicide* is one who, feeling it a burden which he is not able to bear, puts an end to his own existence. A martyr, on the contrary, is a person who, rejoicing in the gift of life, yet prefers to be deprived of it rather than lose a reward, which his faith assured him was better and more valuable than life, and which without that preference he could not attain.

the resurrection of Jesus. The anti-apostolic teachers, as they denied the truth of these doctrines, insisted that an expectation which had such a reward for its object, so far from being thus triumphantly realized, would end in shame and disappointment. The writer asserts the contrary; and he appeals to the spiritual endowments imparted to the Apostles, as evidence of that benevolence in God which ensured its realization: "And this hope will not disappoint us: for the *love of God* hath been poured into our hearts by a holy spirit that is given us." 5.

The enemies of the God of Israel had no pretext so specious for blaspheming Him, as the injunction laid upon his worshippers to suffer in the cause of their Master.* The Apostle here, and in other passages of

* Tertullian furnishes us with a specimen of their reasoning on this subject. Immo dementia, say they, pro Deo mori. Et quis me saluum faciat, si is occidet, qui me saluum debet? p. 488. Incutiat, writes he again at the bottom of page 492, adhuc scorpius *homicidam Deum ventilans*, horrebo plane spurcum blasphemix flatum de hæretico ore factentem. In the Dialogue between Megethius a heretic and the catholic Adamantius, the former argues, that the Christian Church exposed to hatred and persecution, proved the Creator of the world to be a cruel Being, and pointed to another superiour Divinity, whom the disciples of Christ claimed as their patron. Ex eo quod crebris jactamur persecutionibus, et odio hominum laboramus, nonne luce clarius est nos in alterius Dei potestate esse ac ditione, et a jurisdictione Dei creationis alienos? Origen's Works, Pars Secun. p. 963. Against arguments and representations, like these, which were made by the first Gnostic teachers, as well by their followers in after days, the language of Paul is often directed: and whenever the train of his ideas occasions him to speak of the sufferings to which Jesus and his faithful followers submitted, he is sure to paint the character of their common Father in the most amiable and engaging colours. Accept, in addition to that in the text, the following example as one of many that might be produced, "Favour be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

his writings, when speaking of the sacrifices to which the faithful followers of Jesus submitted, takes great pains to vindicate the Divine Being from the imputation of caprice and cruelty, by shewing the good end to be obtained by such trials, and expressing in the strongest terms His love towards the human race, manifested especially in the gift of his own Son to die for them, even at a time when they had rendered themselves odious to him by their wickedness. *The love of God* hath been poured out into our hearts by a holy spirit that is given us. For whilst we were yet without strength,* Christ died at an appointed time for the

The Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who giveth us comfort in every affliction, so that we are able to comfort others in all their affliction, by that comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted by God: for as the sufferings of Christ are abundant in us, so doth our comfort also abound through Christ. For if we be afflicted, it is for your encouragement and salvation: 2 Cor. i. 2—7. What an amiable picture is here drawn of Almighty God! He is the author of *favour and peace*. He stands to the believers, however afflicted, in the relation of a *father*. He merits the blessings (not the curses) of his creatures. He is the father of *mercies*, a God of *all comfort*. He consoles his children under their sufferings. If Christ suffered, it was that consolation might hence flow to his followers. If the Apostles were afflicted, the love of God turned their affliction to the salvation of those whom they had converted. And if the converts, in their turn, were visited with persecutions, by being thus partakers in mutual sorrows, it was ordained they should share in one common comfort. Observe, finally, that God is here stiled *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. This the blasphemers strenuously denied. According to them Christ was not the Son of the Creator, but of a higher and more perfect Divinity who sent him to destroy the works of the God of Israel. See Vol. ii. p. 391, 416—419.

* The clause *οὐτων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν* seems to me to have been misplaced. The original, as it came from the hand of the author, ran, I conceived in this manner. Ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκεχῦται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν οὐτων ἀσθενῶν, διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν· ἐτι γὰρ Χρῆστος κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπερ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανε. *The love of God is profusely*

ungodly. Now scarcely will any one die for a righteous man, (though indeed, some possibly may venture to die for a good man) but *God displayeth his love* for us, in that Christ died for us, while we were yet sinners." 6, 7, 8. He then draws the inevitable inference, that since the universal Father gave his Son for the benefit of mankind while yet enemies to him, He will of course, after they are now become friends by a reforming faith in the death of Jesus, save them from that wrath which was the consequence of their former offences, and enable them to partake in the glory of that new life to which he was raised, "Much more then, after we have been now made righteous by his blood, shall we be saved through him from (the coming) wrath. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by

shed in our hearts, while we were yet weak, by a holy spirit given to us. For Christ died, at an appointed time, for us being yet ungodly. Now my reason for thinking that Paul thus arranged his words is the following. When, in the first number, he writes *in our hearts*, the Apostles upon whom the Holy Spirit had descended on the day of pentecost, were chiefly meant. Until that time they were weak, that is, though the disciples of Christ, they neither sufficiently understood the nature of his Gospel, nor had strength enough to sustain those trials to which it exposed them. But when he adds, *Christ died for us being yet ungodly*, or, as it is asserted in the subsequent clause, *while we were yet sinners*, he principally had in view the Jewish and Gentile believers, converted to the faith after the death of their Master. The attributive *ασθενων*, then, meaning those who already believed but who were not strong in their belief, cannot coalesce in the same member with *αμαρτωλων*, which signified men in their sinful or unconverted state. Besides it conveys, when inserted in the preceding sentence, a very pertinent signification, and accords with a form of speech very usual with the Apostolic writers. Thus Saul, having now received the Holy Spirit, is said to have *increased the more in strength*, Acts ix. 22. In allusion to that strength which the Spirit imparted, the author of this Epistle declares *It helpeth our weaknesses*. viii. 26.

the death of his Son, how much more after reconciliation shall we be saved by his life." 9, 10.

Every inquirer however sceptical would, in the present improved state of philosophy, believe in the future resurrection of mankind, if he previously admitted the fact attested, in the Evangelical records, that Christ rose from the dead. But this was an inference which, in former times, when the laws of the natural world, and the moral attributes of God were little understood, would not by any means be granted. This consideration seems to have induced the Apostle, when arguing that the faithful believers shall be raised to glory conformably to the glorious resurrection of their Master, to leave this ground, and to illustrate the conclusion by an argument less solid indeed, but better adapted to impress his Jewish readers. An opinion, derived from antiquity and perpetuated by tradition, prevailed among that nation, that the race of man would have been immortal on the earth, if the primogenitors had preserved their Paradaisical innocence. From this piece of Jewish mythology, as it might fitly be called, the ingenuity of our author thus reasons: "So then, as through one man sin came into the world, and death through sin; and thus death came upon all men, in as much as all have sinned. For sin was ever in the world before the law, though, while the law had no existence, it was not imputed. But death from Adam to Moses reigned even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression who is a pattern of him that was to come. But the kindness was not like the sin, (for if, by the sin of One, the many died, much more hath the favour of God, and the free gift in the favour of one man Jesus Christ, abounded unto

the many) but the kindness (through Christ) is not (I say) like the case of the one that sinned: for the sin of one ended in condemnation; but the kindness after many offences, in forgiveness. For if death reigned through the sin of one man, much more will they, who abundantly receive the gracious favour of acquittal, reign in life through that one Jesus Christ."

12—18. Which reasoning may be thus stated in fewer words. "The transgression of Adam introduced death into the world, and all have died because all like him have transgressed. On the contrary, Jesus Christ brought life into the world: and as mankind share in the fate of the former, by participating after his example in sin, so they shall unite with the latter in the enjoyment of that glory, honour, and immortality established by his death and resurrection."* There is,

* It would contribute much to the elucidation of our author's ideas, if we divested them of the sensible images under which they are conveyed. The introduction of Sin by means of one man, and of death by means of Sin, is described in figures suggested by the garden, in which the person referred to was placed. The transgression of Adam threw open, as it were, the door of Paradise. Through this, Sin, which like a beast of prey roved around seeking admission, entered into the garden. Death followed soon after in the same way, and seized as its own every individual that was become subject to its Parent Sin. Death came upon all, not because *one*, but because *all* have sinned. Hence we see how far our author considered the transgression of Adam as accessory to the death of his posterity. All met this fate, inasmuch as *themselves* have transgressed after the example of the common parent. Few there were who did not follow this example: and it is these illustrious few that the Apostle intended to except when he says, "Through the disobedience of one man, THE MANY became sinners." 19. *Ακριβως, observes Theodoret, ενταυθα και επι του Αδαμ και επι της χαριτος το ΠΟΛΛΟΙ τεθεικε και γαρ εν εκεινοις ευρισκομεν τινας κρειττους των μειζονων αμαρτηματων γενηνημενους, ως τον Αβελ, και τον Ενωχ, και τον Νωε, και τον Μελχισεδεχ, και τους πατριαρχας, και μεντοι τους εν νομω διελκυσαντας.* All, indeed, in some degree have sinned; and therefore

however, in the argument of our author a force and propriety which can be perceived only by considering his words in reference to the false teachers whom he opposed. The train of his ideas had now fixed his attention on the *Serpent*, the reputed parent of evil, and author of man's moral declension. This was opposed by the Gnostics to the God of Israel, whom they arraigned as an inferior, weak and malevolent Being. In order to shew the converts, that the Serpent was not that all good and powerful Divinity which its advocates supposed it to be, Paul, with much address and in a manner insensible, holds it out as the first cause of sin and death; and that he might vindicate the Creator, he contrasts with these effects of the Serpent, the consequences of the Divine love displayed in the free gift of his Son. The contrast he moreover heightens by observing that, to whatever extent the contagious influence of the seducer had spread itself, the benevolence of God will, through the medium of Jesus Christ, abound, in much greater and more diffusive degree, to the human race. The writer throughout the whole of his argument, uses many apparently superfluous words. For instance, instead of simply saying *The favour of God by Jesus Christ*, he thus loads the sentence, *The favour of God and his free*

all have died. But their sins, being defects arising from the imperfection of human nature, did not in the eyes of a merciful Judge expose them to the charge of guilt, or bring upon them the condemnation which *the many* incurred by imitating the example of Adam. The early descendants, we are told, sinned not after the likeness of the sin of their primogenitor. The dissimilitude, however, consisted only in this. He sinned, though an express command was given him not to sin; but they had no such prohibition. The former therefore was criminal, because he offended against his own knowledge. The latter were not guilty, though erroneous; since they knew no better.

gift in the favour of the One man Jesus Christ. The cause of this superfluity is to be found in the reference which his language carries to the false teachers. Favour (*χαρις*) was with them a current term; but it signified the *divinity* immediately descended from *Bythos* their supreme God. Our author, on the contrary, gives the converts to understand that the *favour* he meant was that, which consisted in the divine mission of Jesus. “*The favour of God—in the favour of Jesus Christ.* The favour, moreover, of which the impostors boasted, was not a gift from God, but *self-possessed* (*ιδιοκτητος* as they stiled their *χαρις*; see *Iren.* p 31.) In opposition to their arrogance in this respect, Paul characterises the Apostolic favour as the gift of God; and to render more prominent the idea that the Gospel proceeded from the unmerited kindness, he annexes another term descriptive of it as the gratuitous donation of God. The impostors distinguished between Jesus and the Christ resident in him. While they anathematised the former as a mean man, they embraced the latter as a glorious God. The absurd distinction led our Apostle on this occasion to assert the humanity and the unity of the Saviour. “*In the favour of THE ONE MAN JESUS CHRIST.*”

His long and intricate argument he thus concludes. “The law entered, and sin abounded: but where sin abounded, favour did much more abound; that as sin reigned in death, so also favour might reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by means of Jesus Christ our Lord,” 20, 21. In this paragraph, and indeed in the preceding ones, Law, Sin, Death and Favour for the Christian Dispensation are personified,

and represented under the figure of moral agents. The door of Paradise being thrown open by the hand of Adam, Sin, like a wild beast from without, entered the garden, usurped dominion over him and all his progeny, and consigned them over to death his own offspring. The Law too, seeing this usurpation and the fate of the sufferers, comes in and apprises the human race of their guilty and enslaved state. Having informed, without liberating them, the Law served only to strengthen the interests of Sin and Death who, in the true spirit of despotism, watched with more vigilance and oppressed with greater cruelty, their subjects now struggling to break their chains. The New Dispensation, delegated for the purpose of subverting the throne of the tyrants, receives however fresh accession, of benignant lustre from the aggravated calamities in which the unhappy captives were thus plunged. Mercy, through the instrumentality of Jesus Christ, passes upon them, when arraigned at the bar of Justice, the sentence of pardon, rules over them in righteousness, and rewards them with eternal life. Such is the representation which the author gives of the nature and tendency of the Christian Doctrine. The allegory is continued throughout the following chapters: and we must consider the language in this light, before we can comprehend the meaning, much less feel the beauties of our author.

The assertion that, where Sin abounded, Favour did more abound, however just in a philosophic sense, was liable to a gross abuse. The unreformed professor would make it a pretext to justify his perseverance in guilt, while the enemy of the Gospel would be ready to charge its illustrious teacher with sanctioning evil

as the means of promoting good. Aware of these consequences, he anticipates them by thus putting the question: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in Sin that favour may abound? By no means; how shall we, who have died to Sin, any longer live therein? 1, 2. The Apostolic converts, in order to testify to the world that they rejected the creed of the deceivers, acknowledged at their baptism the humanity and death of the Messiah, and the obligations they were under to obey the precepts of the Gospel, and like the Founder to die, if necessary, in its support. On this consideration, well known to the persons here addressed, depend the propriety and force of the following language. "Do ye not know that as many of us as were baptised unto CHRIST JESUS, were baptised unto *his death*? 3. See Vol. ii. p. 493, 494. CHAP. VI.

The Christian Church * is represented in the Apostolic writings, under the figure of a *human body* of

* Our Lord, on one occasion, prays that he and his followers should be all *one*, John xvii. 21. In Acts ii. 46. the believers are represented as having *one mind*. The author of this Epistle prays that, *with one mind* and *with one mouth*, they may glorify God, Chap. xv. 6. In his letter to the *Colossians*, he calls Christ *the head of the body of the Church*, i. 18. By virtue of the nutriment and vitality flowing from this head, he wishes them to grow up to the full stature of Christian manhood, Col. ii. 10. He then presently adds: "Let no one deprive you of the prize by a voluntary humility, and a worship of the Angels, intruding into what he hath not seen, puffed up without cause by his fleshly mind, and not keeping to *the head*, from which the whole body, supplied and nourished through the connecting joints, thriveth with the increase of God." 18, 19. The impostors, from the affectation of superior knowledge refused to acknowledge their subordination to Jesus Christ, or in the language of this nervous writer, "Being puffed up without cause did not *keep to the head*. Finally, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians* xii. 12, 13. he thus writes: "For as the body is one, and hath many members,

which Christ was the head. Agreeably to this representation every member, on account of the union and sympathy subsisting between all the parts of the corporeal frame, shared in the qualities and in the fate of their common chief. All died in his death, and rose again in his resurrection. Now this simple and expressive figure enabled our author to paint in remarkable colours that divine influence, which the New Faith was calculated to produce in the lives and conduct of its votaries. As Christ underwent crucifixion, so with him was crucified that *body of sin*, with which each believer was invested in his unconverted state. As Christ rose from the dead, received from his Father a new and celestial body free from the grossness and pollution of corruptible matter, so his faithful followers, by virtue of a firm belief in that fact, were required to lay aside their former vices, and assume a new character, unstained with the contagion of Sin and adorned with the celestial lustre of virtue.—“By this Baptism therefore we are buried with him unto his death, that as Christ was raised by the glory (the glorious power) of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we should (spring up also in the likeness) of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man hath been crucified with him, that the sinful body should be destroyed and we no longer be slaves to sin.”

3—7. Those, who lived under the dominion of sin, were doomed to die, death being the tribute exacted from all his subjects as due to his authority. This

but all these members of this one body, which are many, are but one body; so too is Christ. For we were all baptised in one Spirit *into one body*, whether Jews or Greeks, whether Slaves or Freemen; and all received nourishment from one Spirit.”

tribute the believer in Jesus by participating in his death had now paid. Being thus emancipated from the bondage, he was no longer bound or required to engage in the service, or administer to the wishes, of that inexorable tyrant. On the contrary, it was his interest as well as his duty to employ his members and talents in the cause of that Holy and Immortal Being, whose interposition had rescued him, and under whose banners he had now enlisted: "He that is dead is set free from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we are persuaded that we should also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For when he died unto sin, he died once for all; but now he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sin; but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Let not Sin therefore reign in your dead bodies, so as to obey its lusts; neither give up your members unto Sin for instruments of unrighteousness; but give yourselves up unto God, as alive after being dead, and your members also for instruments of righteousness, unto God. Sin must not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Favour. What then? shall we Sin, because we are not under the Law, but under Favour? By no means. Do ye not perceive that to whomsoever ye yield obedience, ye are his slaves whom ye obey, either of Sin unto death, or of obedience (to the Gospel) unto deliverance." 7—17.

The falsehoods, which the impostors incorporated with the Gospel, and the enormities to which the converts had in consequence been betrayed, must have induced the Apostles to dispatch to the Roman church

an authentic statement of the Christian Faith ; describing the fundamental doctrines it taught, and the moral reformation which it was its object to produce. This is what they seem to have done : and the happy event was that the majority, at least, abandoned their false guides, received the true Gospel and were reformed. “ But thanks be unto God, that ye were slaves of Sin, but are become obedient from the heart unto a form of doctrine unto which ye were transferred ; ’ or more conformably to the figure of the original, “ Ye obeyed from the heart that *mould* of doctrine into which ye have been *cast*. Into the formulary of faith, it seems, sent by Apostolic authority, the Roman converts, like fused metal, were poured. This gave them a new and better form, and impressed them with a fairer image.

The enormities which the deceivers practised, brought scandal upon the Christian name. The crimes of its pretended votaries, however, were not by any means to be ascribed to the Apostolic doctrine, as was done by its indiscriminating enemies. This is perhaps the circumstance which our author had in view when he penned the following singular assertion. “ *But thanks be unto God that ye were the servants of Sin.*” As though he had said : “ I exceedingly rejoice, that in your late misconduct you were influenced by false views, and that consequently the offences which you have committed are in justice to be assigned to the wickedness of your guides and your own mistaken notions, and not to the Gospel itself, as the real cause. — “ But ye obeyed from the heart, — Ye have embraced the Christian Faith, as defined by us, with sincere conviction of its divine origin, and yielded a cordial and unfeigned obedience to its precepts ; so that ye are not

like the deceivers who merely profess to embrace it, in order the more effectually to answer their sinister purposes."

The Gospel which the impostors taught, so far from being instrumental in reforming the vices of its professors, was but a scheme artfully contrived to gratify, in secrecy and security, the impure desires of its fabricators. Denying, as they did, that the principles of morality had any foundation in reason, and maintaining, that the commandments of the Mosaic Law proceeded from the caprice of a malevolent Being, they reduced licentiousness into a *system* ;* which, while it

* As the Gnostic teachers denied all obligation to become virtuous, and made the impulse of their senses the only rule of conduct, it is not to be expected that they should regard their vices, however flagrant, with compunction, or attempt to throw over them a veil of secrecy. So far was this from being the case that, as the Apostle Paul says of them, (Phil. iii. 19.) *they gloried in their shame*. The same thing is attested by Theodoret in the following words. Την δε ασελγειαν συγκαλυπτειν ουκ ανεχομενοι αλλα ΝΟΜΟΝ την ακολασιαν ποιουμενοι. Hær. Fab. Lib. i. 5. *They have not the patience to conceal their lewdness, but make intemperance their LAW*. And it is to their rejecting the just sanctions of divine and human laws, and their becoming in consequence licentious and profligate, that the Apostle refers in the following clause, Παρεσησατε τα μελη υμων δουλα——την ΑΝΟΜΙΑ, εις ανομιαν. Some critics, not knowing what the object was which our author had in view, suppose that εις ανομιαν, in the second clause, is an interpolation. This, however, is by no means the case, as each bears a distinct and pertinent signification; the former denoting a *lawless system* opposed to all legal institutions; the latter, that licentiousness and intemperance which naturally resulted from their loose principles. The testimony given by Irenæus, Epiphanius, and Theodoret, that the Gnostics rejected the obligations of virtue, and maintained that the distinction, made between it and vice, is founded not in nature and reason, but in the arbitrary decrees of men, is signally confirmed by Plotinus; of whose words I shall here give a translation. Speaking of the Gnostic doctrine, that author thus writes: "This system arraigns the Lord of Providence, and Providence itself. It throws dishonour upon all sub-

possessed the form, aimed at destroying the sanctions of all law human and divine. To their conduct under the influence of this pernicious system, the Apostle, I conceive alludes in the following sentence: "Ye yielded your members servants to impurity and to a lawless system, so that ye are become licentious." But the Christian Doctrine, embraced in its native purity, induced them to abandon their vicious practices, and to display, under the banners of virtue, the same zeal which they had hithertofore shewn in the service of Sin. 19. The new converts, having their eyes now opened by the Apostolic teachers, must have reflected with shame on those immoralities in which they had formerly indulged, and which had entailed not only disgrace on the Christian name, but expulsion and death upon many among themselves. To this circumstance the following question seems to bear a pointed reference. "What fruit had ye from those things at that time, of which ye are

lunary laws, and upon virtue which has been found out from the remotest age, and holds even temperance in ridicule; so that nothing here (in this world) appears (to them) in its own nature to be honourable. It also subverts sobriety, and that righteousness which is essential to morals, which is attained by precept and discipline, and by means of which in general man becomes good." *En. Lib. ix. p. 213.* or *Priestley's Early Opinions, Vol. i. p. 217*; where the original is inserted. The opinion that all difference between virtuous and vicious qualities in conduct, proceeded principally from the law given to Moses by an evil Angel, (see *Iren. p. 95.*) is frequently combated by our Great Apostle: He particularly refers to it in the following instance, where it is virtually asserted, that the distinction subsisted previously to the promulgation of the law; and that the law only confirmed the dictates of reason, by pointing out the criminality and the dangerous consequences of Sin: **FOR SIN WAS EVER IN THE WORLD BEFORE THE LAW, THOUGH, WHILE THE LAW HAD NO EXISTENCE, IT WAS NOT IMPUTED;** *Chap. v. 13.*

now ashamed, for the end of those things is death." 21. He then bears his testimony to their reformation, and places before them that eternal life which awaits the servants of God. "But now ye have been made free from the service of Sin, and are become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of Sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." 22, 23.

The deceivers, in order to induce those women of rank and property, who were under the influence of their sentiments, to abandon their families, and to attach themselves with their effects to the seducers, declaimed against the lawfulness of the marriage-state:*

* We meet in 2 Tim. iii. 1—7. a picture of these men drawn in strong colours by the hand of our Apostle. "Of this kind," adds he, "are those who creep into families, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lust." In his letter to Titus, he says, *They overturn whole families, teaching what they ought not, for the sake of dishonourable gains*, Chap. ii. 11. In reference to these impostors he enjoins upon Titus to teach "the young women to be orderly, lovers of their husbands, lovers of their children, chaste, pure, *keepers at home*, good, submitting themselves to their husbands, that the doctrine be not evil spoken of," Chap. ii. 4. That marriage is lawful he decides in opposition to the deceivers, 1 Cor. vii; and in Hebrews, Chap. xiii. he declares it to be honourable in every respect. That they taught the unlawfulness of this institution, in order the more effectually to gratify their own lusts and avarice, is a fact which may be inferred no less from the description given by the Apostles of their character, than from the accounts of them transmitted by Irenæus and others. The following paragraph from Theodoret would alone be sufficient to establish the truth of this fact. After asserting that they made good and evil to consist not in the real nature of things, but in opinion, he subjoins: "I shall not pass over the legislative sanction which they give to their lewdness. They admit the transmigrations (of the soul,) but not upon the principle it was taught by Pythagoras. For he said, that souls which have sinned are sent into bodies, to be duly

And when the Gospel was first preached in Rome, many ladies of fortune and quality appear to have become the victims of their treachery. In the number of these were Vistilia and Hippia, who left their lawful husbands and joined the intriguers when expelled from the Metropolis. So prevalent, indeed, was the evil become, that the government interposed, and sought to restrain it by the enactment of a severe law. The correction of it is the principal object of our author in the

CHAP. VII. following paragraph: " Know ye not, brethren, (for I am speaking to men acquainted with the law,) that the law hath power over the husband as long as he liveth? For the married woman is bound to her husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is at liberty from the law of her husband. So then she will be deemed an adulteress, if she take another husband, while this husband is alive: but at the death of this husband, she is free from that law, so as to be no adulteress, though she take another husband,' 1—4. Here our moralist, after asserting the criminality of those women who married other men while their own husbands were alive, maintains, in opposition to the impostors, the legality of

punished and purified. But these say, that the cause of their being embodied is directly opposite to that assigned by Pythagoras. For human souls, affirm they, are sent into bodies, in order to practise all manner of lewdness; that therefore those souls, which fulfil this end on being once immersed in a body, do not need a second immersion; but that those, which have sinned in a small degree, must be sent twice, thrice, or even oftentimes until they have completed all sorts of baseness." *HÆR. Fab. Lib. i. 5.* We could scarcely credit the truth of this representation, were we not furnished by the Apostle Peter with an account of them, still more shocking and odious, 2 *Epis. Chap. ii.* The deceivers endeavoured to support their opinion of the unlawfulness of marriage, by the authority of our Lord himself. This was a circumstance which he foresaw: and he furnished the historian of his life with a fact to refute it. See *Vol. ii. p. 233, 234.*

marriage, and that even a widow might again enter into that state, without incurring the guilt of adultery.

The above passage, being intended in a literal sense against certain immoral professors in the Roman Church, furnished the fertile and prompt imagination of our Apostle, with an allegory respecting the law of Moses and the people under its jurisdiction. "In like manner, my brethren, ye also are dead to the Law through the body of Christ, so as to belong to another, who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the affections of Sin (made manifest) by the Law, worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been released from that Law by which we were bound, so as to serve (God) in newness of Spirit, not in the old letter." 4—7.

In this paragraph the Law is described under the figure of a husband, whom age or some natural imbecility had disqualified from being the father of a family. The spouse united to him is the Jewish nation. Her affections are alienated by the impotence of the husband: being desirous to have children, she is seduced by the solicitations of Sin. A progeny in consequence is conceived and brought up for death. It may thus be paraphrased: "While married to the Law, you formed an illicit connection with Sin. Seduced from your lawful husband, who had ability neither to prevent the disgrace, nor to remedy the consequence of your infidelity, you brought forth offspring obnoxious to death. The Almighty seeing you thus prostituted, and being desirous that you should bring up children for himself, enjoying his favour, and partaking of his

own immortal nature, sent his Son with power to supply the defect and inability of the Law. Dying, as it were, in his death, you are separated from your former weak husband; and rising again in his resurrection he has espoused you to himself, in order to remedy your adultery with Sin, and to bring up a divine and immortal family." Which allegorical representation, reduced to simple terms is to this effect. "The religion, which we Jews hitherto professed, did not furnish all the information we wanted respecting God and a life to come. The motives it administered, therefore, were not adequate to produce virtue in us, or to check our bad passions. But its defects, in this respect, are supplied by the Gospel, which by its superior advantages, supersedes the necessity of adhering to the letter of the law. It is, therefore necessary, that a change should take place in our tempers and conduct, correspondent to what is undergone by the body of him, to whom we are now united. As Christ died, so may our evil inclinations be deadened: as he rose again to life, so may we enter on a new life of piety and benevolence."

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, *Thou shalt not covet*. But Sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For Sin, taking occasion from the commandment, deceived me and by it slew me. Wherefore the Law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." 7--14.

The Apostle, speaking of the inability of the law to restrain the evil inclinations of those whom it governed, was led by a natural transition to repel the charge of severity and unreasonableness alleged against it by the impostors. A passage from *Clemens Alexandrinus* affords us a specimen of their reasoning. "Covetousness and concupiscence are implanted in the human breast by the Creator of the world; it is therefore ridiculous in him to restrain them by the commandment *Thou shalt not covet the goods, nor the wife of thy neighbour*, especially as such a restraint is not imposed upon the desires of other animals."* This argument, and the inference drawn from it that the law was evil and came from an evil being, Paul answers in the above paragraph, by observing that the law, so far from being Sin, makes known to us the sinful nature and the pernicious con-

* This is the substance of the argument which Epiphanes used in a book composed concerning righteousness. His own words, cited by Clement, are the following: *Ενθεν ὡς γελοιοῖον εἰρηκοτος τοῦ νομοθετοῦ ζημια τοῦτο ακουσεον, Ουκ επιθυμησεις, προς το γελειοτερον ειπειν, Των τω πλησιον· αυτος γαρ ὁ την επιθυμιαν δους, ως συνεχουσαν τα της γενεσεως, ταυτην αφαιρεισθαι κελειναι, μηδενος αυτην αφελων ζωου.* Clem. Alex. Strom. iv. p. 514. Theodoret, in his comment upon this place, furnishes us with another specimen of the manner in which they arraigned the Creator of the world. "Those," writes he, "who live in indolence (meaning the Gnostic monks of Egypt) and are averse to the painful toils of virtue, blame the Lord God for having given (Adam) the commandment: For if, say they, he knew not what would come to pass, how can he be God who is ignorant of the things to come. But if, while he foresaw the transgression, he laid down the commandment, he is himself the cause of its violation."

sequences of Sin, and that it was not our Maker, but sin that hath wrought in us all manner of concupiscence. Much, indeed, is our author to be admired for his address on this occasion. In a happy union of sound philosophy and glowing imagery, he defends the law and its heavenly Author from the imputation of sin and death; and by a train of reasoning, founded on the account which Moses gives of the seduction of our first Parents by the Serpent, he traces these evils to the very divinity which the deceivers idolized, as their real origin. "And the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God commanded the man; saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 8—18. Now had not this commandment been given, Adam might have desired the fruit of this tree and gratified his desire, without incurring any moral guilt. Hence the Apostle, personating our first parents, says of himself, "I had not known the unawfulness of desire, unless the law had said, *Thou shalt not desire.*

When the Serpent saw the commandment which God gave Adam, he immediately sought to tempt him to the violation of it. In order to effect his purpose, he watched an opportunity of coming into the garden, and thus accosted Eve in an unguarded hour;

“ Hath God indeed said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the Serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it lest ye die. And the Serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as Gods knowing good and evil,” Chap. iii. 1—5. In reference, seemingly, to this paragraph, Paul adds; “ Sin (another name of the Serpent) having gotten an opportunity, produced in me by reason of the commandment all manner of desire.”

“ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” Conformably to this account, our Apostle subjoins, “ The commandment of life became fatal to me: for Sin having taken an opportunity, seduced me by the commandment, and slew me thereby.” He then draws this inference, in opposition to the deceivers,* “ Wherefore the law is holy,

* They made a distinction between justice and goodness. The God of the Law, according to them, was *just* but not *good*. The Apostle, on the contrary, affirms that the law and the commandment were *holy*, *just*, and *good*. The ancient Christian writers, be it here observed, were very sensible that our author in this place opposed his language to the sentiments of the Gnostics. *Ιδου*, writes Theophylact, *φανερωτερον Μαρσιονιτων, και Μανιχαιων και Σιμωνιανων, και παντων των την παλαιαν διαβαλλοντων, τα σοματα ενεφραξεν. αγιον γαρ νομον κηρυττει σαφως, και την εντολην αγιαν, και δικαιαν, και αγαθην.* Theodoret in the general analysis, which he gives of the Epistle to the Romans, thus speaks in reference to the above passage. *Επειδη δε και Ιουδαιους ηδει λιαν αντεχομενους του νομου, και τους το*

and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Divested of its allusion to the narrative of Moses, the substance of Paul's argument is briefly this: "Restraint upon immoral desires, however just and proper, is apt to render those desires more strong and importunate. But the guilt of this is not to be imputed to the prohibition, but to the stubborn nature of sinful habits, which become violent and clamorous when deprived of their accustomed indulgences."

The thread of our author's subject led him next to describe the force of bad habits, the imperious ascendancy they exercise over the mind, even when opposed by the dictates of the judgment, and to point out the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ as the only mean of emancipating us from their bondage. "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, a slave sold to sin." 14. Here Paul speaks of the Jews in his own person; and in allusion, as I conceive, to the Patriarch Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, the land of slavery, he represents them under the absolute dominion of Sin, treating them with all the indignity and oppression which their forefathers had literally experienced from Pharaoh and his officers. A slave in antient times, and even in modern days when the rigour of despotism is much softened by the prevalence of humanity, was not, when commanded to do any thing, informed what might be its design. The brutal Master only issued his orders, without condescending

Μαρκιωνος και Βαλεντινου νοσοουντας, και μεντοι και Μανιχαιους λιαν τουτου κατηγορουντας, καθαπερ αριζος τις σφατηγος παντοθεν υπο πολεμιων κυκλομενος, και τουτους βαλλει κακεινους, και το τροπαιον ισησιν· ουτως ο θειος αποσολος και των αιρετικων το σιφος, και των Ιουδαιων την φαλαγγα δια της θειας κατελυσε χαριτος.

to explain the object which he had in view in the execution. To this circumstance Jesus refers, in thus addressing his disciples: "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant (ὁ δούλος *slave*) knoweth not what his Lord doeth;" John xv. 15. As though he had said, "A slave is not informed what his Master intends by the work which he is commanded to perform." Similar to this is the situation of a man who is under the bondage of evil habits. He stops not to consult his understanding, in respect to the consequence of complying with the impulse of desire, but obeys it, as a slave does an imperious task-master, without directing his attention beyond the object desired—a task-master, whose will though odious, he is compelled to execute, rather than his own. "I do not know what I do: for I do not perform what my own will suggests; but what I hate that I do."* 15.

* Every person who has duly attended to the operations of his own mind, or observed them in others, must be sensible that a man of confirmed habits, be they good or bad, is governed solely by the influence of those habits; and that, so far from consulting his understanding in each point of conduct, he often acts in direct opposition to what he knows to be its dictates. And yet Mr. Godwin, in his celebrated work *Political Justice*, Vol. i. p. 62, could pen the following paragraph which, in my opinion, betrays a childish inattention to the human mind, and to the laws by which it is governed. "From this view of the subject we shall easily be led to perceive, how little the fact of the variability and inconstancy of human conduct is incompatible with the principle here delivered; that the voluntary actions of men in all cases originate in their opinions. The persuasion that exists in the mind of the drunkard in committing the first act of intoxication, that in so doing he complies with the most cogent and irresistible reasons capable of being assigned upon the subject, may be exceedingly temporary; *but it is the clear and unequivocal persuasion of his mind, at the moment that he determines upon the action.* The thoughts of the murderer will frequently be in a state of the most tempestuous fluctuation; he may make and unmake his di-

The Apostle, having through the ascendancy of evil habits, lost the government of his conduct, and being obliged, like a vassal, to comply with the dictates of Sin now become his arbitrary Lord, infers that the law, which apprised him of the approaching tyrant, and warned him against the danger of being led by him into captivity, must have been good ; and that the criminality of his actions attached not to himself but to the despot who had the power of commanding his obedience. “ But if I do what my own will does not suggest, I assent to the law that it is good. And it is no longer I, then, who act thus, but Sin that resides within me.” 16, 17. Which allowing for the latitude of the figure, conveys this simple signification : “ *The natural disapprobation I feel for vice, proves the excellence of that divine law which forbids it ; and the guilt of indulging vicious propensities, rests with those circumstances in our education which have generated them.**”

abolical purpose fifty times in an hour ; his mind may be torn a thousand ways by terror and fury, malignity and remorse. *But whenever his resolution is formed, it is formed upon the suggestions of the rational faculty ; and when he ultimately works up his mind to the perpetration, he is then most strongly impressed with the superior recommendations of the conduct he pursues.*” This representation, indeed, is palpably false. Even the drunkard or the murderer, if interrogated and ingenuous, would pronounce it to be so. They would acknowledge that the conduct, which they respectively pursued, had no recommendations from reason ; that, at the moment of indulgence, they were conscious of acting contrary to their habitual sense of right and wrong ; that they were actuated only by the impulse of appetite and of revenge ; that in the clamour of the passions for gratification, the voice of conscience was drowned, and the judgment, pointing to the pernicious consequences, overcrawed.

* This assertion, implied in the language of our Apostle, is thus differently expressed by *Dr. Paley*: “ If we are in so great a degree passive under our habits, where, it is asked, is the exercise of virtue, the guilt of vice, or any use of moral and religious knowledge ? I answer,

The tenets, which the Eastern philosophers held respecting matter and the nature of the soul, are well known to learned men. The former which composed the human and all other bodies, was thought to be the work of an inferior evil Being, and the source of all evil natural and moral; while the latter emanated from the Deity as a ray of light from the sun, and possessed the same immortal nature, the same pure desires with its great Original. When separated from the parent divinity, and confined in the body, it led a life of captivity and imprisonment, from the infection of which it sought to break loose, and to return upwards to the fountain of life. To these tenets, maintained by some of the Gnostics,* our author next alludes, and

in the forming and contracting of these habits." The Principles of Moral Philosophy. Vol. i. p. 43.

* Simon Magus who, as it suited his purpose, supported or denied the sentiments of the philosophers, adopts their language in the following paragraph. *Magnus sane labor est agnoscere eum homini in carne posito. Omnibus enim tenebris tetrius, et omni luto gravius est corpus hoc quo circumdatur anima. Recog. Lib. ii. 58.* The Marcionites maintained that human nature as consisting of corrupt matter, the production of an evil Being, was itself evil and corrupt, a doctrine which is prevalent to this day amongst the votaries of the orthodox faith. *Ὁ ἀπο Μαρκίωνος φύσιν κακὴν ἐκ τῆς ἕλης κακῆς, καὶ τοῦ δικαίου γενεμένην Δημιουργοῦ, Strom. Lib. iii. Vol. ii. p. 515.* The heretic Hermogenes entertained the same sentiments. He however supposed that matter, instead of being the production of an inferior Being, was co-eternal with the Supreme Good Divinity. Speaking of *evil*, which, as such could not have proceeded from pure goodness, he says; *Ex vicio alicujus rei factum, ex materia esse sine dubio. Tertul. p. 234.* This was the opinion of Maximus Tyrius, who calls *natural evil* *τῆς ἕλης πᾶθος*; See his last Dissertation. The goddess *Isis*, according to Plutarch, constituted the *Material Principle*. His zeal for this divinity led him, in opposition to the Gnostic philosophers, to represent it not as in its own nature evil, but, though intermediate and the common recep-

from them copies a convenient figure to express the stubbornness of confirmed bad habits, their contrariety to the principle of reason, and to the inclination of the mind while yet uncorrupted by evil gratifications. "For I know in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: the desire indeed is with me, but the complete performance of what is good I find not. For the good, which I wish, I do not; but keep doing the evil which I disapprove. But if I do what I disapprove, I no longer act thus myself, but Sin which dwelleth in me: I find therefore this condition that when my mind wisheth to do good, evil is close to me." 18—21.

The *soul* or, as the Apostle stiles it, *the inward man* proceeding from the Deity, accords with his law and seeks to obey it; but *the flesh* or carnal habits are inclined to the law of Sin. These opposite inclinations in the two principles of which man is thought to be composed, give rise to hostilities in the human frame similar to those wars, which the two supposed authors of good and evil wage against each other from their respective dominions: the one wishing to bring mankind nearer himself, and to raise them by successive improvements to higher degrees of glory and felicity; the other endeavouring to chain them down to a system of matter, (the corrupt nature of which generates lusts and evil habits, just as a dead body does putrefaction and worms) and by that means holding them in eternal

tacle of the good and the bad principle, to be yet inclined to the former. *Ἀμφοῖν μὲν οὐσα χωρὰ καὶ ἴλη γέπουσα δὲ αἰεὶ πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον ἐξ ἑαυτῆς.* De Iside Sec. liii. p. 133. Celsus, though he was an Epicurean, and believed the materiality of the human soul, adopted when convenient the language of the eastern sages. *Ψυχὴ μὲν ἐργὸν θεοῦ, σωματός δὲ ἀλλή φύσις.* Orig. Con. Cel. p. 202.

bondage to Sin and death. "For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but perceive another law in my members, making war against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law in my members. Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this deadly body? The favour of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." 22—25.

A reader is little able to understand the meaning, much less can he relish the beauties of his author, unless his imagination be capable of tracing out those sensible objects whence the writer has copied his allusions. This observation holds in all compositions characterised by sublimity, boldness, and energy, but in none more than in the writings of Paul. The obscurity, which has ever been felt in his letters, proceeds chiefly from an inattention to the sources of his ideas and images.—A variety of instances might be selected to justify the truth of this remark. The preceding paragraph furnishes one striking example where it is verified. Represent then to yourselves Sin, Misery, and Death, and whatever else is bad in human nature, arrayed on one hand under the banners of the evil principle, and combating all that is rational, virtuous and divine on the other, under the command of the Good.—Represent farther, the Supreme Being standing with the Saviour at his side upon the battlements of heaven, and looking on the conflict below.—Imagine that, on seeing the battle terminating in favour of the adversary, and mankind led away into captivity by the triumphant foe as the prize of victory, He instantly dispatches his beloved Son with power sufficient to defeat the fatal victor, and to rescue the prisoners; that this divine Messenger appears, overthrows the hitherto victorious enemy, li-

berates the captives, and sets them at liberty to return from the kingdom of darkness, and ascend in triumph to their Father in the heaven.*—Imagine these things, and you will, it appears to me, have the very allusions which filled the imagination of our divine penman. He saw, as it were, before his eyes the awful conflict; and perceiving himself led away by the unrelenting foe into everlasting bondage, he exclaims in the language of despair, “Who can deliver me from this body of death?”† But no sooner did he put the question than

* The emancipation of the mind from contagious matter, its ascent towards the Supreme Being, the arduousness of the way, the obstructions that press it downward along the steep declivity, the energy of God drawing it to himself and prevailing over the obstacles in its progress, are sublimely described by Philo in the following passage, which as it is founded on the philosophy of the times, is not unlike this of our Apostle. Ὅτω δὲ ἐξεγενετο—τον πατέρα και ποιητην των συμπαντων ὄραν, ἐπὶ ἀκρον εὐδαιμονίας ἰσῶ προεληλυθῶς, οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀνωτέρω θεοῦ, πρὸς ὃν εἰ τις τοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς ὀμμα τεινας ἐφθάκε, μόνη εὐχεσθῶ και ἴασιν· αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀναντεῖς ὁδοὶ καματηροὶ και βραδειαὶ, ἡ δὲ κατὰ πρᾶνου φρονα, συζμον εχουσα το πλεον ἢ καθῶδον ταχρεια και εραση. Πολλα δὲ κατῶ βιαζομενα, ἂν οὐδὲν ὀφελος, ὅταν ἐκ των αὐτου δυναμενων ἀνακρεμασας τὴν ψυχὴν ὁ θεος, ὀλη δυνατωτερα πρὸς ἑαυτου ἐπισπασαιτο.

† Τίς με ῥυσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου, *Who will deliver (or rescue) me from the body of this death*, that is, *this moral death*. Our author alludes to the philosophic notion, that the body is, as it were, the *grave* of the soul, and that the emancipation of the soul from the contagious influence of the body constitutes *its resurrection*. Thus writes Plato (in *Cratulo*, p. 400.) Σημα τινες φασὶ το αὐτο εἶναι (σώμα) τῆς ψυχῆς, ὡς τεθαμμενῆς ἐν τῶ νῦν παρόντι. Clemens Alexandrinus has words deserving of notice, Μαρτυροῦνται δὲ και οἱ παλαιοὶ θεολογοὶ τε και μαντεῖς, ὡς διὰ τινος τιμωρίας ἡ ψυχα τῶ σώματι συνεζευκται, καθάπερ ἐν σώματι τεθαπται, Strom. iii. p. 518. This writer understood, that the Apostle alludes on this occasion to the above philosophic notion: for he presently adds, “The Soul of the Philosopher greatly vilifies the body, and flees from it, and seeks to be with itself: And with this somewhat accords the divine Apostle; saying, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death*. See Vol. ii. p. 517.

he discovered his deliverance effected, and by way of reply was going to specify his gracious deliverer; but the gratitude, which he felt for the primary author of his emancipation, arrested his tongue and extorted from it instantaneous accents of joy and thanksgiving. —“ I Thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord.” As though he had said, “ I give thanks to the Almighty for my deliverance; it is accomplished by Christ the man Jesus, and the Lord of the Apostles.” The whole representation reduced into simple language, teaches this joyful lesson. “ The principles of reason and conscience, aided and sanctioned as they are by the law of Moses, are unable to furnish motives sufficient to withstand those temptations, to restrain those propensities, to eradicate those inveterate habits, which, resulting from the nature and constitution of man, expose him to condemnation and to death: but the prospect of a new life, unfolded in the Gospel, and established by his death and resurrection, affords motives adequate to the accomplishment of these desirable ends.”

The Epistles of Paul being *controversial*, written, I mean, with the view of exploding those false notions, which the anti-apostolic teachers introduced into the Christian Church; the only way of ascertaining the precise meaning of our author, in any disputed passage, is to consider those of their tenets, to which he alludes, and which it is his object to undermine. The Judaizing teachers then rested in the rites of the law, to the neglect of moral duties as the means of pleasing God. The Egyptianizing zealots, on the contrary, accused the law of caprice and unreasonableness; maintained, that man is corrupt by nature, that he has no natural sense of right and wrong, that matter is essentially corrupt, the

source of corruption and death to mankind, and the production of an evil and inferior divinity. Now these are the points, which our Apostle refutes in the preceding obscure chapter. After asserting the legitimacy of marriage, he inculcates that ritual observances, on account of their inefficacy, are superseded by the Gospel. He next defends the law from the charges brought against it by his adversaries; and though he allows that we work what is evil, yet the practice of it, he inculcates, is not inherent in the human frame, or an effect natural to, and necessarily springing from it, but proceeds from a foreign cause,—from Sin, who unfortunately having gotten admission into the body, as into a house, after it had been constructed by the hand of the Great Architect, there compels the passions, and reason itself, to act in obedience to its arbitrary and tyrannic injunctions. “But if I do that, to which I am not inclined, I no longer act thus myself, but Sin which dwelleth in me.” “This,” says Theophylact, “is no fault of the flesh; for if a thief get possession of a palace, and dwell therein, it is not the fault of the mansion. So, in the present instance, if Sin dwell in our members, flesh is not, on that account, depraved; for it is overruled by tyranny.” That the human heart in its original and pure state, is not, as the false teachers inculcated, disposed to wickedness, but inclined to whatever is honourable and good, is the lesson which our author repeatedly inculcates when he says, “The *desire* (to do good) is indeed with me,” 18. The good *I wish* I practise not, but practise the evil which *I do not wish*, 19. *I delight* in the law of the Lord God after the inward man; but perceive another law in my members, making war against the law of my mind, and

bringing me into captivity to the law of my members.”
 23. By the law *of my mind*, he means, the approbation of virtue and the disapprobation of vice planted by nature, or generated by the circumstances of life, in the human breast. Or more generally he signifies by it the moral law of nature coeval with man, and written by the Maker on the tablet of his heart. The existence of this law, which the impostors denied, and the harmony of its dictates with the divine law promulgated by Moses, our author enforces in saying; “I delight in the law of God after *the inner man*; I see another law (the law of Sin) making war with the law of *my mind*; I accord with the law as being good, συμφημι τω νομω ὅτι καλον.” 17.

The Apostle then draws the following conclusion, “There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS, to them that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Observe how this conclusion is intended to shut out the false teachers and their followers. Though they embrace the Christ, they rejected the man Jesus; and, notwithstanding their profession, they still *walked after the flesh*. The true believers, on the contrary, received the man Jesus as their Saviour, and cultivated those virtues which he displayed in his conduct, and which he has prescribed in his spiritual or divine law. To those, therefore, who are thus in CHRIST JESUS, whose behaviour and dispositions conform to his holy injunctions, the forgiveness of past sins, peace with God, the hope of immortality, belong. The Apostle, personating the body of the faithful disciples, adds; “For the spiritual law of life, which is in CHRIST JESUS, hath made me free from the law of Sin and death.” Which is to this ef-

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fect, " That refined system of morality, sanctioned by the well grounded hope of a new life, through the resurrection of Jesus, has delivered us from the influence of sinful habits, and saved us from that moral death which is the penal effect of Sin."

The Christian law, inasmuch as it penetrates the innermost recesses, reaches even the heart, and condemns or acquits those under its jurisdiction, not from their outward actions, but from the motives which gave them birth, far surpasses all other laws in excellence and efficacy. Of its superiority in these respects, our author proceeds to remind the impostors, who meditated the most atrocious deeds, and executed them whenever secrecy rendered the execution secure and practicable. " For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God having sent his own Son in the likeness of Sinful Flesh, condemned Sin of sinning with the Flesh." 3. Here again Sin and Flesh are personified. The latter receives the former into her apartments. They, however, conduct their assignations with such secrecy, that the Law, or the legitimate husband of Flesh, though convinced of their guilt, had no means sufficient to arraign and punish the offenders. The Law, we are told, *was weak through the flesh*. By which we are to understand, that, through the imperfection of human discernment, it could not recognize crimes that were only *intended* or *meditated* in the heart, nor punish, for want of clear and positive evidence, such things as were done in *secret*. This, neither the Law of Moses nor any human law could effect. But, in order to supply its inability, the Omniscient Creator, seeing Sin making a private appointment with Flesh, invests his own Son

with the dress and similitude of the former, and dispatches him to the very place where, under the covert of darkness, the latter had agreed to meet him. Flesh arrives, at the place appointed. The Son of God drops his feigned appearance, and stands before her in the figure of her real husband. Thus he detects their guilt, exposes the odious character of Sin, and brings the partner of his crimes to merited punishment. Divest the paragraph of its personification, and you have this simple meaning; "The Christian law, far surpassing all other laws in extent and efficacy, pronounces a person criminal, though his crimes may be unseen by man, and though committed only in design. Extending its cognizance into the bosoms of men beyond the reach of human discernment, it decides upon their characters from the motives and designs of their hearts, and thus detects and punishes sins which pass undetected and unpunished by other laws."

The Apostles appear, on some occasions, to speak of the law of Moses and the predictions of the Prophets under the figure of that great personage, in whose advent and death they were fulfilled; they consider the Jewish system, I mean, as though it were a *human being*, having a *body* and a *soul*, "*flesh*" and "*spirit*." The figurative language, the symbolical maxims, the external rites, the promises and threatenings, (all of which in their primary application were of a temporal nature,) constituted the former; while the moral internal signification, annexed to its outward forms, and the extension of its sanctions, metaphorically interpreted to a future state of being, analogous to the present, compose the latter. Hence we may see the pro-

priety and origin of the phrases *to be in the flesh*, *to walk after the flesh*, *to mind the things of the flesh*, which here and elsewhere occur. They signify the interpreting of the Jewish Dispensation in a literal sense, the indulging of carnal habits and desires, and the adhering to those external rites of the law, which the depravity of the Judaizing Zealots disposed them to substitute for the cultivation of virtue and holiness. On the contrary, *to be in the Spirit*, *to walk after the Spirit*, *to mind the things of the Spirit*, mean the adoption of a spiritual and metaphorical interpretation, together with a reformation of manners and purity of heart, corresponding in refinement to that interpretation. The Sadducees or Jewish Epicureans, together with the *Cerinthians*, who expected in the reign of the Messiah a temporal kingdom, affixing to the sacred writings a literal acceptance, maintained of course that the Mosaic system gives no intimation of a future spiritual state, and that its sanctions terminate on this side of the grave. To this false representation, the language of Christ and his followers stands opposed. They must, indeed, have allowed, that the precept of the law, and the declarations of the prophets, referred in a primary sense to the present state of existence; but they insisted that those precepts and declarations have a tralatitious reference to a future *spiritual world*; and that this spiritual world, of which the law contains, like vital sparks, latent intimations, (just as the corporeal frame comprehends, though invisible to sense, the spirit that animates it,) it was the object of the Christian lawgiver to develope, and to establish by fresh displays of heavenly wisdom, and by the miracle of his own resurrection, the life and immortality, which he brought to light in the Gospel, being no more than the

Jewish system, purified of its external gross forms, expanded into light and carried to its consummation. These general remarks will, I conceive, enable us to comprehend the full force of the following verses. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit : for they who are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh ; but they after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For the sentiment of the flesh is death, but that of the spirit is life and peace." 4—7. Which may be thus paraphrased : "That the principle of a future retribution, enveloped in the law, might be unfolded in the views, and exemplified in the character, of those faithful disciples, who take the law to consist in a figurative or spiritual, and not in a literal or carnal sense. For those, who adhere to the literal sense, mind only the things of this carnal life ; whereas they, that adopt the figurative interpretation, mind chiefly the things which belong to the future spiritual life : since the sentiments of those, who support the ritual system, extend not beyond death ; while those of the spiritual, look forward to immortality and friendship with God."

The Zealots boasted in God, or prided in being the favourites of heaven ; and, though they contended for the ordinances of the law, refused obedience to it as a system calculated to produce piety and benevolence. To these circumstances our author seems to refer in the following verse, "The sentiments of the flesh are at enmity with God : for they do not submit themselves to the law of God ; nor indeed can they ; so that they of the flesh cannot please God." 7, 8. The Gnostics, Irenæus informs us, though zealous for external rites, and devoted to impure pleasures, arrogated

to themselves the title of *spiritual*, while they stigmatised the catholic believers as being *of the flesh* or *carnal*. It is perhaps to this fact that Paul alludes, when he thus addressed himself to the sincere Christians in the Roman Church: "But ye are not of the flesh, but of the spirit, inasmuch as the spirit of God dwelleth in you." Though diametrically opposite to Christ in dispositions and character, they nevertheless affected to rank among his first and most favoured disciples.* The pretension probably led our author to make this fine declaration; "But, if any one hath not the Spirit of Christ, he doth not belong to Christ," 9. He then lays down this admirable criterion, to ascertain whe-

* Irenæus gives this account of their superior claims to the favour of God. *Τας δὲ εσχηκίας το σπερμα της Αχαμωθ ψυχας αμεινους λεγουσι γεγεροναι των λοιπων· διο και πλειον των αλλων ηγαπησθαι ὑπο του Δημιουργου, μη ειδοτος την αιτιαν, αλλα παρ αυτου λογιζομενου ειναι τοιαυτας. διο και εις προφητας ετασσεν αυτους, και ιερεις, και βασιλεις,* p. 33. To the false claims of the impostors to be thus ranked with Prophets, Priests, and Kings, our author alludes, 1 Cor. iv. 8. "Do ye *reign as kings* without us? I wish indeed ye did reign (in the true sense of the term,) that we also might reign with you." The Apostles, because they were poor, unlettered, and obscure, and because they endeavoured to repress the false aspiring views of the new converts, were represented, it seems, by the anti-apostolic teachers, as the cause of poverty, ignorance, and obscurity to those who followed them. In reference to those high titles, which they arrogated to themselves, and those terms of reproach with which they stigmatised the faithful disciples, the Apostle adopts the language which follows, "We (the Apostles) are *fools* for Christ's sake, but ye are *wise* in Christ: we are *weak*, but ye are *strong*: ye are *honourable*, but we are *despised*." 10. See Tertul. p. 250, 281, 487. Iren. p. 32, at the top: where it appears that they called the Catholic believers, *insipientes, columbae, simplices, infantes, pueri, infirmi, σαρκικοι, ψυχικοι*, and the like: and, on the contrary, applied to themselves the epithets opposite to these. See also p. 32, of this *Analysis*. Our Lord has often referred to this temper of the impostors, Vol. ii. p. 12, 331.

ther they were in reality the disciples of Jesus. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, and the spirit is life because of righteousness," 11. Which is to this purport—"If you be really his followers, your former bad passions will be so subdued, as though the body, which is supposed to be the source of moral evil, and which is become mortal or obnoxious to death in consequence of having sinned, had actually died, and the spirit will become so pure and holy, as though it had already been disengaged from the corrupt influence of the flesh, and raised to that state of spirituality and enlargement which hereafter awaits the virtuous." This short sentence, be it remarked, carries an allusion to the following tenets in the popular philosophy of the times, that sin was the cause of death to the human race; that the matter, which composes the body, is the origin of those vices which debase the Soul; that the vital principle is distinct from the corporeal frame; and, lastly, that the disengagement of the soul from the body, so as to rise to a more exalted sphere of enjoyment, constitutes what philosophers called its *new life* or *resurrection*. See Vol. ii. p. 517.

The next point insisted upon is the resurrection of Jesus: and he inculcates that all those, who are now animated to virtue and holiness by the Divine Spirit, will hereafter, like him, receive a new life from the Almighty. "Now, if the spirit of him, who raised Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in you, He, who raised up Christ from the dead, will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit that dwelleth in you," 11.

The impostors pretended that themselves, being spiritual, had the privilege of indulging in every immoral practice, in every impure desire, while the Apostolic believers were under the necessity, as being carnal, of exercising self-denial and submitting to the painful toils of virtue.* To this impudent pretension, it appears to me, Paul, speaking of the true disciples, refers in the next verse, "We are not then, brethren, debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye will die; but if ye mortify the deeds of the body by the spirit, ye will live." 12.

The God of Israel according to the false teachers, being cruel and evil, was an object of *terror*, not of *love*, to his creatures. The malevolence which rendered him thus odious and terrible, they urged, appeared from the unmerited sufferings imposed even upon his own worshippers. In opposition to this representation, the writer again places before the Roman converts the most engaging picture of the Almighty. Those who return to Him from the slavery of Sin, he adopts for his own *sons*, exercises towards them an affection the most endearing, and makes them fellow-heirs with the first born in his heavenly kingdom. "As many as are directed by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry ABBA FATHER." The Apostle, it is observable, joins with the Greek the Hebrew name of *father*. The reason appears

* Irenæus gives the following account of them. ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ ἦμιν μὲν, οὓς ψυχικούς ὀνομαζοῦσιν, καὶ ἐκ κόσμου εἶναι λεγοῦσιν, ἀναγκασίαν τὴν εὐχρατείαν καὶ ἀγαθὴν πράξιν· αὐτοῖς δὲ πνευματικοῖς μὴ δαμῶς.

to be this. *Abba* is a term which an infant, unable yet to speak, is capable of articulating, just as in our language a child can say *Papa*, when it is scarcely in his power to enunciate other significant sounds. By this delightful image our amiable Apostle insinuates to the Roman converts, that they were yet but *babes* in the Gospel, and that the Supreme Being regards them, even in this infantine state of virtue and knowledge, with all that fond complacency, which swells the bosom and illumines the countenance of a tender parent, when he hears his babe uttering, in broken accents, the endeared name of father.* In proof of the assertion, that the Almighty, exercising paternal affection, regards them as his own offspring, Paul appeals to the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which enabled the Apostles to perform miracles and to speak with unknown tongues. "The Spirit itself confirmeth our spirit (our spiritual doctrine,) that we are sons of God," 16. Being then sons of God, it follows by the rights of sonship, that they are entitled to inherit the divine kingdom, in communion with his first born; but he insinuates that in order to share in the glory of Christ's exaltation, it was

* A remark of Clemens Alexandrinus on the following words uttered by our Lord, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes*, Luke x. 21, is worthy of being here noticed, as coinciding precisely with the above observation: *Νηπιουσ ἡμας ὁ διδασκαλος αποκκλων τους των εν κοσμω σοφων επιτηδειοτερους εις σωτηριαν ἔι σοφοι σφας ἡγουμενοι τετυφωνται και επιβοαται αγαλλιωμενος και υπερευφραζινομενος, ὁιονοι συντραυλιζων τοις νηπιουσ*, Pæd. Lib. i. Cap. 6. p. 117. *The teacher calls us (the Catholic believers) BABES, as being better fitted for salvation than the wise of this world; who deeming themselves wise are swollen with pride; and he (Jesus) cries exulting and delighted as if* LISPING WITH THE BABES.

necessary to imitate him in suffering for the cause which he espoused. "But if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ, if we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him also," 17. He then silences the blasphemers by observing that the hardships, which the followers of Jesus are required to undergo, will hereafter be compensated by a glorious reward, in comparison of which their present momentary trials deserve no consideration. "And I look upon the sufferings of the present state as of no consequence, with respect to the glory that shall be displayed in us." 18.

A belief derived from the prophets, prevailed not only among the Jews, but among other nations,* that some great Prince would soon appear in the East, who, like the sun in its meridian, ascending the throne of universal empire, would by the lustre of his benign countenance disperse the shades of superstition and error, loosen the chains of slavery and oppression, and raise the human race to freedom, virtue and happiness. In consequence partly of this expectation, the Christian Doctrine, on its first promulgation in Rome, was embraced by multitudes of Jews, Egyptians and Greeks.

* This is attested by the Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius. The words of the former are the following: *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.* His. Lib. v. 13. The narrative of the latter is much the same. *Percrebuerat Oriente toto, antiqua et constans opinio, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur: Id de imperatore Romano quantum eventu postea prædictum patuit, Judæi ad se trahentes rebellarunt;* Suet. *Vespas.* Cap. 4. A still more decisive proof of the prevalence of this opinion is the *Pollio* of Virgil, where the poet has, through the medium of the Sibylline oracles, copied not only some sentiments from the Jewish prophets, but also traces of their language.

The dispute which it occasioned threw the city into confusion. The emperor, mistaking for a while the claims of the Messiah and the nature of his religion, was filled with alarm ; and in order to check its progress he adopted every method, however cruel, which policy could suggest or power execute. Upon the converts he exercised unusual severities. Such of the Jewish youth as were capable of bearing arms, the senate pressed into the military service, punished with death those who had the magnanimity to refuse enlisting, and banished the rest into islands, the severity of whose climates was likely to prove fatal to their constitution. Nor was this all : That he might suppress the first appearance of sedition and keep the people, anxious to throw off the yoke of slavery, in subjection to his controul, Tiberius augmented the military forces in Italy, formed a camp at Rome, confined the prætorian guards, and extended to the provinces those salutary precautions which he exercised with great vigilance in the capital.*

* These momentous facts are developed in Vol. i. p. 139—157. They are attested in a surprising manner by a man, who professes to have been in Rome when the fame of Jesus Christ was first announced in that city. He writes to this effect ; Cum in talibus cogitationibus et negotiis ego versarer ; sub imperio Tiberii Cæsaris fama quædam sensim, a verna tempestate initio sumpto, passimque crevit, et revera bonus Dei nuncius mundum peragravit, Dei voluntatem silere et tegere non valens. Ubique igitur amplior et major fiebat referens, quod quidam in Judæa, principio sumpto a verno tempore, æterni Dei regnum Judæis annunciat, quo fruiturum esse ex illis dicit eum qui vitam rectam eman-datam ducet : quo autem credatur ipsum divinitatis plenum hæc loqui ac inspirare, multa mirabilia signa et prodigia edit sola jussione, quasi qui a Deo acceperit potestatem : surdos enim facit audire, cæcos videre, pedibus debiles ambulare, claudos recta incedere ; omnem morbum depellit, omnem Dæmonem fugat : sed et leprosi scabri, eo eminus tan-

These events are recognised in the following passages of the Apostle Paul, which from their hitherto impenetrable obscurity have baffled all the efforts of criticism satisfactorily to explain. "The creation with heart-felt desire, expects the appearance of the sons of God (for the creation is subject to vanity, not of its own accord, but because of the subjector) in hope, that the creation itself also shall be delivered from cor-

tum viso, sanati abeunt, mortui vero oblati suscitantur, nihilque est quod facere nequeat. Atque quo plus temporis præteribat eo major firmiorque per complures advenientes existebat non amplius, inquam, fama sed rei veritas. Jam vero et cœtus per loca fiebant consultationis et deliberationis causa quisnam est qui apparuisset, et quid vellet dicere, Clem. Hom. i. Cap. 6.

In this curious paragraph then it is asserted, that in the reign of Tiberius a divine messenger appeared in the land of Judea; that the fame of him prevailed in every country, and soon overspread the whole world; that it reached the capital of the empire as a vague rumour, but was established into a matter of fact by very many who thence arrived in the city, and that assemblies of people were held in order to enquire who Jesus was, and what might be the object of his mission—assertions these which exactly accord with the facts that have been inferred from the writings of Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Philo, Orosius, Tertullian, Seneca, Dion Cassius, and Plutarch. This and other instances, which might be adduced, shew that the book ascribed to Clement of Rome, though undoubtedly spurious, is in many respects more deserving of credit than is generally allowed. I shall here only observe, that the author appears, from the representation which he gives of Christ, not to have believed in his divinity. He stiles him only the *good messenger of God*, and says that in proof of his divine mission he performed signs and wonders, having received power from God to do them,—*παρὰ Θεοῦ εἰληφως ἐξουσιαν*. An orthodox writer would not by any means have thus expressed himself. Tertullian inculcates, that the miracles of Jesus proved the *reality of his divinity*; and he represents Tiberius, when convinced that they were really performed, as drawing the same inference. Tiberius ergo, cujus tempore nomen Christianum in seculum intravit, annunciata sibi ex Syria Palæstina, quæ illic veritatem istius divinitatis revelarant, detulit ad senatum cum prerogativa suffragii sui, Apol. Cap. v.

ruptible slavery into the glorious freedom of the children of God." 19—22. Here it is implied, or rather asserted, that the *creation*, the civilised part of mankind, earnestly expected the *sons of God*, or in other words, *the Messiah* and *his happy subjects*, to make their appearance; that they cherished this expectation in hope of partaking in the blessings and privileges of his government, but were prevented from attaining this heart-felt desire by the *Subjector*, that is, *the existing Power*. The paragraph may thus be paraphrased. "The nations of the world, subjugated at present to a vain, false, and debasing system of superstition and despotism, cherish in their hearts, though they dare not shew it in their words and actions, the fond hope of being emancipated under the auspices of the expected Prince, and of sharing with his own subjects the blessings of his kingdom." The expectation which the creation cherished, and of which the Apostle here speaks, was founded upon the erroneous notions universally prevalent in early times, that the looked-for Redeemer would be literally a king, and that his second appearance to establish a boundless and everlasting kingdom, on the earth, was at hand. These notions our author in the succeeding verses proceeds to rectify. But a judicious regard to the prejudices of his readers obliged him to touch them, like painful wounds, with a tender hand. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and is in labour until now. And not only (the creation), but we who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, even we (I say) groan within ourselves, expecting our adoption to be a deliverance of the body." Which is to this effect: "Not only do the Jews and Gentiles indulge the mistaken expectation of a corporeal emancipation, of an earthly

deliverance under the Messiah ; but the Apostles themselves, to whom the Holy Spirit has been communicated in order to lead them into the truth—into a knowledge of the true nature of that redemption which Christ confers upon his faithful followers—even the Apostles, I say, have indulged the same fond but mistaken idea.” Having made this remark, he intimates that the salvation conferred by Jesus, does not respect the present, but the future world, and is an object of hope not of sense. “ We are saved by hope ; but it is not hope when the thing hoped for is seen : for how can a man hope for what he already seeth. Since we hope for what we do not see, let us wait with patience.” 24, 25.

“ And this spirit likewise helpeth our infirmities ; for we know not, as we ought, what to pray for : but the spirit intercedeth for us with secret groans. And he who searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, that it maketh intercession for the Saints according to (the views of) God.” 26, 27.

In this most obscure passage, the Apostle describes himself and his fellow Christians as weighed down by the various calamities to which they were exposed by their profession, under the figure of slaves fatigued with labour and tortured by cruelty :—slaves, whom, though oppressed, the unfeeling master, suffers not to complain nor even to groan aloud. Thus situated, they send, in order to be redressed, a petition to their common Father, requesting him to interpose and effect their deliverance. This petition is entrusted to the *Holy Spirit*, whose office, like those supposed intermediate angels employed between God and men,

was now to convey and spread before the throne of Mercy the prayers of the afflicted. The Spirit, perceiving that the petition contains such requests as little accorded with the counsels of heaven, lays it aside, and in a manner more conformable to the Divine Wisdom, intercedes for the deliverance of the holy sufferers. The paragraph, divested of its metaphor, and of the allusion it bears to the notion of intercessory angels,* maintained by the Jews and pagans, conveys the following simple signification. "The Spirit, imparted to us the Apostles, supports us under

* The Pagans supposed there existed "a middle order of beings between the Gods and men, interpreters of the wills of the Gods to men, and ministering to their wants, carrying the prayers and supplications of mortals to heaven, and bringing down thence in return oracles and all the other blessings of life." They are the words of Plato, quoted by Plutarch, De Iside, Sec. 26. Those demons from their office were deemed *mediatorial*. In the number of these the Gnostics ranked the Saviour, and for this reason stiled him *Chrestus*. Paul has a pointed reference to this notion in the following verse, where he asserts the mediatorship of Jesus to the exclusion of other demons, and affirms him to be no other than a man: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS." 1 Tim. ii. 5. To the office of Demons or angels employed, as was supposed, in presenting the prayers of men before God, Peter also thus alludes, when speaking of the impostors. "They serve the flesh with unclean desires, and despise government, are bold, self-willed, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities; whereas angels, greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord." 2 Peter ii. 10, 11. As though the writer had said, "The deceivers, agreeably to the edict of the emperor, being punished by the præfects of the provinces for the vices of which they are guilty, speak evil of those præfects in return; and through the medium of those intermediate demons, in the existence of which they affect to believe, offer up to God their imprecations against them. But such imprecations, those angels lay aside, as being unfit to be presented to the throne of Mercy." Which, divested of the allusion, only means that the prayers of the unrighteous offered, like so many indictments to heaven, will not be heard.

our trials, and has rectified those mistaken ideas which, in common with others, we cherished respecting the character of the Messiah, and the nature of his kingdom: while yet uninstructed by the Spirit, we knew not what to pray for. But we are now taught to offer such prayers as are conformable to the Divine Wisdom: and though the prejudice of our hearers in favour of temporal advantages, prevents us from expressing in plain terms, the spiritual nature of those blessings which we ask, yet God, who knoweth our hearts, and heareth our most secret wishes and aspirations, understandeth the true import of those supplications presented to him in behalf of the faithful."

The Apostle in the next place, holds up the Deity as an object of Love; and he removes the cavils of those who arraigned Him, by observing that the afflictions of his servants, so far from being proofs of malevolence, are but instruments in his hand to work out their final good; "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," 28. The writer after this, resumes the allegory, which he uses in the seventh chapter, and in which he compares mankind under the influence of inveterate habits to children torn by tyranny from their homes, and sold into slavery in a distant land; and the Supreme Being to a tender father, who sends to invite them to return and redeem them from their degraded state. Now a father would faithfully remember those unhappy children whom cruelty or fraud had forced away from his family, and easily recognize them when, after being ransomed, they revisited their native soil. And this the Universal Father is here represented as doing towards his human offspring. Having a previous knowledge of

them he recognizes such as are ransomed, on their return home from the captivity of Sin. While they were yet in remote bondage and unacquainted with his kind design, he resolves to redeem them and bring them back again to his household. As soon as they appear he causes them to lay aside the sordid dress, the meagre looks which they were compelled to wear in their state of slavery, and invests them with all those ornaments and privileges which one beloved child who, remaining at home while his brethren were gone astray, had enjoyed in the immediate presence of his affectionate Parent. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called (invited to return) according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also fore-ordained to conform to the image of his Son, that this Son might be the first born of many brethren. And whom he fore-ordained, those he also called; and whom he called, those he also pardoned; and whom he pardoned, those he also glorified," 28—31. The purport of which may be stated in the following propositions:—The providence of God governs the affairs of mankind, his wisdom has previously ordained whatever comes to pass: even the sufferings of his faithful servants are his decrees, though no indications of malevolence in him, since they are adapted to promote their ultimate happiness: such is his benignity, that he not only receives every returning penitent into favour, but has, without any merit or effort on the part of mankind, effected their emancipation; and the scheme by which he emancipated them, so far from being the result of sudden and capricious partiality, was from the beginning preconcerted by his wisdom, and made the object to which all the dispen-

sations of his providence directly tend : And, finally, all those persons, however obscure and afflicted at present, if they resemble Christ in the lustre of his moral character, shall share hereafter in the glory of his person, and in the privileges of his kingdom.

The converts in Rome, misled by mistaken views of the new faith, and actuated by a deep hatred of tyranny, and an ardent love of liberty, opposed, we have seen (Vol. i. p. 157—161) the abuses of the Roman Government, which was rendered very oppressive by the wicked administration of Sejanus. The opposition, however just, brought upon them the hatred of that minister. In order to be revenged upon a people, whom he at once hated and feared, he presented to the Senate various heavy charges against them. The crimes, of which a few comparatively were guilty, he extended to the whole body of the Jewish and Egyptian converts; and he employed with success his influence with Tiberius to have them disgraced and punished. The opposition made to the followers of Jesus by the government, and the accusations laid to their charge, are facts to which our author adverts in the following verse : “ What then shall we say to these things ! if God be for us WHO CAN BE AGAINST US ? SHALL ANY BRING ACCUSATION AGAINST THE CHOSEN OF GOD ? God acquitteth them. DO TH ANY CONDEMN THEM ? Christ hath died, or rather he is risen ; and, standing at the right hand of God, pleadeth in our behalf,” 31—35.

Tiberius, in order to separate the converts from their allegiance to the new Prince, under whose banners they had lately enlisted, banished some into remote

islands ; while those who were of suitable age, he forced into the military service. On these measures the Apostle must have had his eye when he triumphantly put the question, **WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST.** He then enumerates the several hardships which they underwent in consequence of those measures, and expresses his confidence that the love of their Master will enable them to triumph over their difficulties. " Shall tribulation, or oppression, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." The Jewish youths, who refused entering into the army at the instigation of the Senate, were put to death. The greatest part determined, attests Josephus, to preserve their laws inviolate, submitted to this fate rather than become soldiers. *Jud. Antiq. Lib. xviii. Cap. iii. p. 879.* On this circumstance turns the propriety of the following words, which the Apostle has selected from *Ps. xlv. 22.* "**FOR THY SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL THE DAY LONG :**" Which means, " We are destroyed, not because we are guilty of any crimes, but because of the attachment we shew to the Almighty, and to the cause in which we are engaged— We are not secretly assassinated by night, but butchered, like flocks of sheep, in the face of day ; and to this merciless treatment we are exposed from morning to evening."

While the undisguised enemies of the Gospel, on one hand, used open violence to withdraw the true believers from the faith ; its pretended friends on the other, employed opposite but more effectual means to answer this end. In opposition to the man Jesus, the endeared Lord of the Apostles, they preached a Christ

descended from heaven, invested with *powers* and *principalities*, and accompanied with *angels*; they affected, moreover, to reveal an unknown divinity superior to the God of Israel, whom they called by the name of *Bythos*,* or *Bathos*. By such fictions, these enemies of the truth sought to undermine the Christian cause. The Apostle next directs his attention to them, as uniting with the advocates of despotism and superstition in their endeavours to separate the true believers from Christ. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor *angels*, nor *principalities*, nor *powers*, nor things present, nor things to come, nor *height*, (*Hyp-soma*), nor *depth*, (*Bathos*), nor any other Being, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." 38, 39.

* The deceivers called their Supreme God *Bythos*, Iren. p. 7. In the Excerpta of Clemens Alexandrinus he is stiled *Bathos*. Η σιγη φασι, μητης ουσα των παντων προβληθεντων υπο του Βαθους. This *Bythos*, they represented as *higher* than the Creator of the world, υψηλοτερον τι και μειζον του του ουρανου και γην και παντα τα εν αυτοις πεποιηκος Θεου. In reference to this representation, the Apostle here gives it the name of *υψωμα height*. That he adverts to the Gnostic notions, and that the names used in this place are copied from the Gnostic school, will appear very clear, if we duly attend to the accounts given by Irenæus and Epiphanius on this subject. *The fables and endless genealogies* (1 Tim. i. 3.) which they invented, had no other object than to seduce the converts from the Creator of the world. The primary links in that chain of fictitious beings were *Buthos*, *Nous*, *Logos*, *Φρονησις*, *Σοφια*, *Δυναμις*, *Αρχαι*, *Αγγελιοι*. See Epiphani. p. 69. If, then, this succession was fabricated in order to separate the believers from the true God, the words of our author were very pertinent and significant, when he says: "I am persuaded, that neither ANGELS, nor PRINCIPALITIES, nor POWERS, nor HYP'SOMA, nor BATHOS, nor any other BEING can separate us from the love of God."

The chief pretence, which the Gnostics had for attempting to alienate the affection of his people from the benevolent Creator of the universe, was the malevolence imputed to him, and the sufferings of his votaries. These sufferings they alleged, not without plausibility, as a decisive proof of his cruelty. On this occasion, and indeed in all other places, where our illustrious teacher notices the persecution of the Christians, he impresses his hearers in the strongest terms with the benevolence of their maligned Father. "If God be for us, who is against us? He, who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all; how will he not also with him freely give us all things?" 32—"In all these things, we are more than conquerors THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US." 37. "For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life will be able to separate us FROM THE LOVE OF GOD in Christ Jesus our Lord." See above, pages 61, 62.

The calamities, which their profession entailed on the new converts, and the ignominy attached to the name of Jesus, were the chief circumstances that deterred the Jewish nation more generally from embracing him as the Messiah. Our Apostle, having his ideas now fixed on these causes, passes over to the effect; and, in a language highly characteristic of the goodness and tenderness of his heart, expresses his deep-felt sorrow for the perverseness of his countrymen in rejecting their Saviour. "I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me testimony in the holy spirit, that I have great grief and continual sorrow of heart (for I too once gloried in being an anathema from Christ) on account of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." 1—4. The conduct of Paul, in extend-

ing to the Gentile converts those privileges which the Jews had hitherto enjoyed under the Mosaic Dispensation, and in defending that liberty with which Christ hath made them free against the encroachments of the Judaizing Zealots, brought upon him the accusation of being an enemy to his own countrymen, and of conferring upon others the rights which belonged only to the chosen people of God. This charge he repels, when he says; *I have great grief and continual sorrow on account of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*' The assertion that, so far from entertaining any hostile views towards them, he indulges the most tender regard for their interests, our author introduces in a very solemn manner. *I speak the truth in Christ, my conscience also bearing me testimony in the Holy Spirit. To speak in Christ or in the Holy Spirit, is to assert a thing in the name of a legislator, the sanctions of whose law extend to the inward thoughts.* By this phrase he insinuates that, in this and all other declarations, he avoids the equivocation and duplicity of language practised by the Gentile and Gnostic teachers; that he ever speaks the truth with the utmost sincerity and fairness, and annexes to his words the very sense which they obviously convey.

So infatuated and depraved were the Jewish unbelievers, that they not only refused Christ to reign over them, but *anathematised* or *cursed* him, and even gloried in so doing. The Apostle, having himself been once guilty of the same temerity, mentions this circumstance as a reason for not being severe in condemning them, but, on the contrary, for exercising towards them sorrow and compassion: It is worthy of notice,

that the writer employs, seemingly, the very words, which the refractory used, in order to soften the glare of their guilt by mixing with it the shades of his own, "I myself (as well as they) gloried in being an anathema from Christ, or *gloried in anathematising Christ.*"

From the days of Moses the Jews and Egyptians had cherished towards each other the bitterest enmity. This unfortunate Spirit, indulged even after they were now become converts to the Gospel, disposed the latter to triumph in the severe treatment, which the former in those times generally experienced from the Romans, and in the loss of those privileges which belonged to them as the chosen people of God. This circumstance induced our author to defend the Jewish nation against their Egyptian false brethren. He accordingly asserts the reality of those prerogatives, which distinguished them from other nations; and characterises the Israelites as the people to whom they were appropriated. "I have great grief and continual sorrow of heart on account of my brethren, who are Israelites; WHOSE was the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the religious service, and the promises." 4. The high estimation in which Abraham and Joseph were generally held for their acknowledged wisdom, virtue, and antiquity, might have induced the Egyptianizing Christians to deny that they ranked among the founders of the Jewish nation; representing the former a Chaldean, the latter an Egyptian. They, too, denied that the Christ, being an *Æon* or *God*, had a human body born in the line of David, and that the Supreme Divinity was the God of Israel, whom they blasphemed as an inferior evil Be-

ing. Against these errors the Apostle continues the defence of his countrymen. WHOSE ARE THE FATHERS, AND OF WHOM IS CHRIST, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, WHOSE* IS THE GOD OVER ALL, BLESSED FOR EVER MORE. AMEN. 5.

* I render the text conformably to the conjecture of *Schlichtingius*, who for $\delta \omega \nu \epsilon \pi \iota \pi \alpha \nu \tau \omega \nu \theta \epsilon \omicron \varsigma$, has proposed to read $\omega \nu \delta \epsilon \pi \iota \pi \alpha \nu \tau \omega \nu \theta \epsilon \omicron \varsigma$. That this is the true reading is demonstrable from the following considerations: 1. This is a phrase which all ancient writers, Jewish and Christian, uniformly applied as descriptive of the Supreme God, or of Him who is over all. See *Wetstein* on the place. 2. The sentiments of the men whom the Apostle had before him, prove this to be the reading which originally came from his hand. They blasphemed the God of Israel, and denied that he is the God over all. What could have been more proper and necessary than to assert, in opposition to such a doctrine, that the Most High God belonged to the Jewish people, and that he was an object not of blasphemy but of praise; and these are assertions contained in the text thus corrected, *Whose is God over all blessed ever more. Amen.* 3. Had the original stood, as it now does, the early fathers would have cited this clause in proof of the divinity of Christ; but neither *Justin*, I believe, nor *Irenæus*, nor *Tertullian*, has quoted it with this view, though they have seized with violence and avidity every passage in the New Testament, which was capable with the least colour of justice of being perverted to the support of that doctrine. That omission, then, is a fair presumption, that the original in its present state is not the true reading. 4. Finally, the most judicious of the orthodox critics became so sensible of the inversion of $\omega \nu \delta$ into $\delta \omega \nu$, that they have abandoned the latter as foreign and impertinent. Hear the remarks of the learned *Taylor*. "Christ is God over all, as he is by the Father appointed Lord, King, and Governor of all.—But what this part of his character, in which he is more nearly related to believing Gentiles than to Infidel Jews, has to do with privileges belonging to the latter, doth not seem to me very clear. Much less can I conceive, why the Apostle in this particular enumeration of Jewish privileges, should not mention their relation to God, as *their God*, in which they particularly gloried (Chap. ii. 17.), and which was indeed the glory of all their glories, being the first and grand article in the covenant with Abraham, and which he fails not to insert among the singular privileges of *Christians*, (Chap. v. 11.) when he is shewing that the subjects of their glorying were not inferior to those of the Jews. How could he overlook the

The writer thus continues his animadversions in reference to the Egyptianizing teachers. “Not that by any means the word of God hath failed: for all the posterity of Israel are not true Israelites; nor all Abraham’s offspring children of promise; but, saith the Scripture, the posterity of Isaac shall be the children: that is, the children of the flesh are not God’s children; but the children of promise are counted his children. For this was the word of promise; according to this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only so, but it was thus with Rebecca likewise, who had conceived twins by our father Isaac. For, before their birth, when they had done nothing either good or evil, that God’s purpose of choice (not from works but from the will of him who calleth) might remain: it was said unto her, the elder will serve the younger; as it is written: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? By no means; for he saith unto Moses: I will shew mercy

main Article in this list? Or what if there should be a transposition of a single letter in the text $\delta \acute{\omega}\nu$ for $\acute{\omega}\nu \delta$? This will remove every difficulty. For then the text will run naturally enough thus, $\acute{\Omega}\nu \eta \nu \iota \theta \epsilon \sigma \iota \alpha \kappa \acute{\iota} \acute{\Omega}\nu \omicron \iota \pi \alpha \tau \epsilon \rho \epsilon \varsigma \kappa \alpha \iota \epsilon \acute{\xi} \acute{\omega}\nu \omicron \chi \rho \iota \sigma \tau \omicron \kappa \alpha \tau \alpha \sigma \alpha \rho \kappa \alpha, \acute{\Omega}\nu \omicron \epsilon \pi \iota \pi \alpha \nu \tau \omega \nu \theta \epsilon \omicron \varsigma \epsilon \upsilon \lambda \omicron \gamma \eta \tau \omicron \varsigma \epsilon \iota \varsigma \tau \omicron \upsilon \varsigma \alpha \iota \omega \nu \alpha \varsigma. \text{A} \mu \eta \nu.$ In English thus, WHOSE is the adoption, &c. WHOSE are the fathers, and of WHOM as concerning the flesh is Christ, WHOSE is the God over all blessed for ever Amen. Thus the grand privilege will be inserted to advantage, and stand at the top of a lofty climax, rising from the *fathers*, to *Christ*, to *God*. We have indeed no copy to justify this reading. But the foresaid considerations seem to make it probable the article (δ) might be very early transposed.—As there are no accents in the ancient Manuscript a transcriber might take ($\acute{\omega}\nu$) the Genitive Plural for the Participle of $\epsilon \iota \mu \iota$, and then the article (δ) which follows ought, agreeably to the Greek idiom, to precede. This might occasion the transposition.” *Taylor’s Note on the place.*

unto whom I please, and pity to whom I please. So then, to wish is nothing, to run is nothing, but to receive mercy from God. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh: For this very purpose I have raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee; and that my name might be declared through all the earth. So that he hath mercy where he chooseth; and hardeneth where he chooseth," 6—25.

In order fully to comprehend the meaning of this difficult and memorable passage, it is necessary to recall the circumstances which the writer had before his eyes. He is arguing, we have seen, with certain men, who supported the superstition of the Egyptians, in opposition to the Jewish system; who pretended to reveal and worship a God superior to the God of Israel, whom they blasphemed as an evil Being. They insisted too, it is probable, on the nullity of the promise first made to Abraham, and afterwards repeated to Isaac and Jacob, and in proof of this pointed to the degraded and dispersed condition of his descendants. Now the Apostle, in order to obviate the hasty conclusion thus drawn from the infidelity and consequent degradation of his countrymen, represents the promise as made to those who were the seed of Abraham in a metaphorical, not in a literal, sense. "Not that, by any means, the word of God hath failed, (the divine declaration hath by no means been nullified in the present unbelief of the Jews): for all the posterity of Israel are not true Israelites; nor all Abraham's offspring children of promise. But, saith the Scripture, The posterity of Isaac shall be the children; that is, the children of the flesh are not God's children; but the children of the promise are counted his children," 6, 7, 8.

The circumstance, he next insinuates, of the promise being unfulfilled, so far from proving its invalidity, was presignified by the very late period of Sarah's life and superannuated state, when she bore the child in whose birth the promise was in part realized. "For this is the word of promise, According to this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." Esau and Jacob were pronounced by the divine oracle, while yet unborn, (Gen. xxv. 23.) to be the representatives of *two great nations*, namely, of the Israelites, and the Egyptians. As the two former had one father, so the latter, however envious of each other, sustained the same relation to God. Now, in order to allay the animosities of the Jewish and Egyptian converts, and to awaken in their bosoms the sentiments of brotherly love, the great teacher admonishes them of their descent from a common Parent, "Rebecca also had conceived BY ONE." The meekness and address of our Apostle present us with a similar instance in Acts xvii. 27, where he reminds the philosophers of Athens, who partook of the general hatred against the Jews, that all the human race were the offspring of the same father. Esau the elder brother forfeited his birth-right, and became a servant to Jacob the younger. This representation, considered in reference to the people whom they typified, signifies that the Egyptians, who flourished in power and opulence at a time when the Israelites laboured in a poor and enslaved condition, would sink in obscurity and oppression; while the people, whom they held in slavery, should rise to prosperity and eminence under the auspices of Jehovah. "As it is written; Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." That

is to say: "The nation whom the former represents, I have crowned with prosperity and happiness; while that, denoted by the latter, I have depressed in bondage and misery." The circumstance of the two nations having been thus pre-ordained by providence, and presignified in the fate of their respective representatives before they were yet in existence, was well adapted to preclude the Egyptians, on one hand, from boasting in their superior antiquity, and the Jews, on the other, from triumphing in their subsequent ascendancy over their unfeeling oppressors. And this was the laudable object which Paul had in the following verse. "For, before their birth, when they had done nothing either good or evil, that God's purpose of choice (not from works but from the will of him that calleth) might remain; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger."

The Egyptianizing teachers, though they might not admit the justice of this representation, would not fail to deduce from it an additional argument for that capriciousness, and injustice, which they ascribed to the God of Israel. The Apostle anticipates the impious inference by putting the question, "What shall we say then, Is there unrighteousness with God? By no means: for he saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," 14, 15. By this Paul inculcates, in opposition to the blasphemers, that *mercy* and *compassion* are the leading features in the character of God; and that he exercises these attributes towards his human offspring, not indeed according to the narrow and partial views of any one individual or nation, however wise and powerful, but according to

the dictates of his own unerring wisdom and boundless love. He then ascribes the reward proposed in the Gospel to the benignity of God, and not to any qualifications in the candidates which might merit his favour. "The prize then is not from him who runs, nor from him who has the will to run, but from God who gives it in mercy," 16. This right of the Supreme Being to confer favour on whomsoever he pleased, Paul with great skill and delicacy, illustrates by an example taken from the Mosaic history, which was at once calculated to humble the pride of the Egyptian impostors, and to evince the superiority of the God of Israel over the fancied Supreme Divinity which they affected to worship. "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh : For this very purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth : so that he hath mercy where he chooseth, and hardeneth where he chooseth." Observe that, while the writer so repeatedly represents the Almighty as exercising *mercy*, he instances his severity only in *hardening* the heart of Pharaoh, and not in destroying him : And he is careful to state the design which God had in thus treating the Egyptian monarch. This treatment did not proceed from cruelty, capriciousness, or ill-will towards the sufferer ; but from a regard to the advantages, which all mankind would derive hence in becoming acquainted with the name and character of Jehovah. "That I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

The assertion, that the Creator acts as it pleaseth him, and that none can counteract the execution of his will, furnished the blasphemers with another objection.

“ Why doth he still find fault ? Who hath opposed his will ? ” These questions, being put with an insolence that criminated the Divine conduct, and put too by men who were disqualified by their ignorance and depravities from enquiring with candor and meekness into the reasonableness of God’s dealings with mankind, the Apostle, instead of answering, repels by holding up the uncontrollable right which the Deity has to dispose of, as it pleaseth him, the creatures of his hands. “ Nay, O ! man, but who art thou that disputest with God ? shall the work say to the workman, Why didst thou make me thus ? Hath not the potter such power over the clay, as to make out of the same lump one vessel for honourable uses, and another for dishonourable ? ” 20, 21. The promptitude and fertility of our Apostle’s imagination are here worthy of notice. His attention was now for some time fixed upon that part of the Mosaic history, which represents the Israelites as compelled by the task-masters of Pharaoh to work in mortar and brick, *Exod. i. 14.* Hence he exhibits the Egyptian oppressors in the humble image of earthen wares wrought for menial purposes, and their destruction in the Red Sea, under an allusion to the same vessels dashed on the ground and broken to pieces, after the purposes for which they were made had been answered : while the Israelites, whom the Almighty delivered out of Egypt, he likens to utensils richly decorated and wrought for honourable uses. “ What if God, wishing to display his anger and to make known his power, produced in much patience vessels of anger, fitted only for destruction ; and (chose) to exhibit his rich and glorious (ornaments) upon vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared for glory, (for glorious purposes ?) ” 22, 23. Which question amounts to this effect : “ What

though the Sovereign Disposer of all things punished with exemplary severity, a people, towards whom he had exercised great forbearance, and whom their vices had disqualified for the honour of his patronage and friendship; on the contrary, what if by a splendid display of power he rescued the Jewish nation from bondage, and conferred upon them the most honourable distinctions as his chosen people, *Ought he, on these accounts to be charged with cruelty, caprice and partiality?*" To prevent, however, the injurious conclusion, that he regarded with partial fondness the descendants of Abraham to the exclusion of other nations, the writer immediately subjoins, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews are invited, and indeed pre-ordained to participate in the blessings of the Gospel: and this important point he corroborates by the authority of the Jewish teachers: "Whom he also called, even us, not only from among the Jews, but from among the Gentiles also. As he saith too in Hosea: I will call that my people which was not my people; and her beloved who was not beloved. And, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people: there will they be called sons of the living God. But Isaiah crieth out concerning Israel: though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, that remnant only will be preserved. For a complete and short account will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Isaiah foretold: Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a race, we should have become as Sodom, and have been like Gomorrah," 24—29.

The Gentiles, immoral as they previously had been, received the faith on the sole condition of repentance and amendment; whereas the Jews sought to establish

their own righteousness, or their exemption from the penalty of Sin and claim to the divine acceptance, by ceremonial works and not the cultivation of virtue. Accordingly our author adds : " What shall we say then ? Truly, that the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness overtook righteousness, even righteousness which is of faith : but that Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, did not reach a law of righteousness. And why ? Because they sought it not by faith, but by works of the law : for they stumbled against that stone, as it is written : Behold ! I lay in Sion a stone to stumble at, and to strike against, and none who trusteth in it shall be disappointed," 31, 32, 33.

Anxious to repel the charge that he entertained wishes unfriendly to his countrymen, Paul again expresses his heart-felt desire for their salvation, and candidly acknowledges that, in the opposition they made to the Gospel, they were actuated by a zeal that was laudable, though not tempered by knowledge :

CHAP. X. " Brethren, the desire of my heart, and my prayer to God in behalf of Israel, is indeed for their salvation : and I bear them testimony, that they have a zeal for religion, but not according to knowledge," 1, 2. One principal reason, which induced the Jews to reject the Messiahship of Jesus, was the circumstance that the Apostles extended to other nations the blessings of his Gospel, and substituted the cultivation of genuine piety and universal benevolence in the room of ceremonial oblations, as the means of acceptance with God. To this cause of their perverseness our Apostle adverts in the following verses : " I bear them testimony, that they have a zeal for religion, but not according to knowledge : for not knowing the righteousness

of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not subjected themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law so as to justify every one believing in him," 3, 4. The *righteousness of God* means the Gospel, being the free gift of God, and containing terms of salvation conformable to the wisdom and goodness of God. See Chap. i. 17, iii. 22. where it is described by the same phrase. A scheme of redemption, which required the eradication of every vicious habit, and the mortification of every impure desire, the Jewish people in general, it seems, refused to accept, but obstinately rested, as the grounds of justification, on external forms more favourable to their corrupt propensities. Paul here stiles Christ THE END of the law; meaning that the Doctrine which Christ taught, is under the veil of figurative language contained in the law, and is what constitutes its main *object, perfection, developement, or consummation*. Of this the Jewish zealots, confining their attention to the literal sense, were ignorant: and their ignorance in this respect induced our Apostle to say that they had zeal, but not according to knowledge. Paul indeed allows with great candor, that the ritual observances instituted by Moses might be rested upon, as a solid ground of justification, if those rites answered their intended end, viz. if they preserved their votaries from the immoralities of their Gentile neighbours, and generated in them purity of heart and manners. "Now Moses writeth of the justification by the law, that the man who doeth these things shall live by them," 5.

The great lawgiver of the Jews, foretelling the blessings which would await that nation, if they refrained from the vices they had imbibed from intercourse with

the Pagans, and turn to the Lord with all their hearts, adds: "This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it," Deut. xxx. 11—15. This passage our author quotes in the following manner. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above: Or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach," 6, 7, 8. Christ and his Apostles, it has already been remarked, appear to have considered the language of Moses, while it carried an immediate reference to the circumstances of the Jewish nation in his own times, as susceptible of a secondary metaphorical application to those who rejected the Gospel in after ages. Hence Paul interprets the reformation, enjoined by the Jewish lawgiver, as ultimately signifying that *righteousness, justification*, or the cultivation of universal virtue, produced by a faith in the divine mission of Jesus. The *commandment* he also understands to mean *Christ*, and the *word* to be the same with the *Christian Doctrine*. The interpretation, which the Apostolic teachers put upon the law of Moses, justified the writer in these substitutions. But his chief reason for so doing, was apparently to render the lan-

guage of the Jewish lawgiver more appropriate to the situation and character of the Zealots. According to them, the law and the prophets proceeded from two different Gods, and consequently had no connection with each other. This notion Paul undermines, by representing the Gospel as forming the internal and vital part of the Mosaic System; and Christ as the the *object* or *end* in which all its ordinances and promises ultimately terminated. The deceivers taught, that the supernatural being, descended on Jesus at his baptism, separated from him when apprehended, and flew up into heaven no more to return. They also maintained, that the body of the man Jesus was not raised from the dead. In reference to these false and dangerous notions, our author, it appears to me, thus interprets the words of the Jewish lawgiver: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring down Christ from above; or, Who shall descend into the deep, to bring up Christ again from the dead." In order to avoid the ignominy, which in those days attached to the Christian profession, and the trials, to which the true believers in consequence submitted, the Gnostics scrupled not to deny Christ before men. While they affected to believe in his divine mission, and to worship him as a divine being; they neither submitted to his authority as their Lord, nor acknowledged him to be the same with Jesus of Nazareth. These notions unfold the propriety of the following clauses. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach. For, if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe from thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," 8, 9. Observe, the Apostle ex-

horts the converts to believe *from their hearts*.—"For with the heart a man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth he confesseth unto salvation," 10. As though he had said: "The fruits of righteousness which render us acceptable to God, are produced only in him who looks forward to a new life through the resurrection of Jesus; who embraces the Gospel from a sincere conviction of its truth, and with a firm resolution to be governed by its precepts: and he alone, who in defiance of all temporal considerations openly confesses Christ, will be saved from the evils which await the children of disobedience." In opposition to the Judaizing Zealots, who maintained that God was not the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, (see above p. 54.) Paul adds: "For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed: for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him." 11, 12.

What justice and propriety must there appear in the following quotation, when it is recollected that, in consequence of the wide dispersion of the Jewish and Egyptian converts from Rome, the light of the gospel, like that of the sun in the firmament, was conveyed to every quarter of the globe. "But I say have they not heard? Yes verily; THEIR VOICE WENT FORTH INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS INTO THE EXTREMITIES OF THE WORLD."* 18.

* The subject, to which these words are applied by the Psalmist xix. 4, shews that the passage is cited not as a *prophecy*, but as a pertinent *coincidence* with the matter in question. This is an observation

After intimating, that the reception of the Gospel by the Gentiles, and even by a *foolish nation* (meaning the Egyptians, who, on account of their superstition and vices, scarcely deserved to be ranked among rational beings) was but the fulfilment of ancient prophecies, verses 19, 20, 21, Paul hastens to preclude an inference, which a Gentile convert, not sufficiently influenced by the meek spirit of his religion, might be disposed to draw; namely, that Jehovah had now abandoned for ever his hitherto peculiar and chosen people: "I say, then, hath God rejected his own people? By no means: for I also am an Israelite, of Abraham's seed, of the tribe of Benjamin. God had not rejected his own people whom he hath known so long. What?

CHAP. XI.

made by Theodoret. Τοῦτο δὲ προέηλον ὅτι οὐχ ὡς προφητικῶς περὶ αὐτῶν εἰρημένον τείθεικεν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀριστοτελεῖν δυναμένον τοῖς παροῦσιν πραγμασίαι. If we attend to the context in which the original verse stands, we shall perhaps discover the association which brought it to the recollection of our author. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.—Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world: in them hath he sent a tabernacle for the sun, which is a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." 1—6. Now the sun is the most common image, under which all ancient Christian writers describe the Saviour. As, therefore, the former diffuses light and genial influence over the natural world, so the latter, when he first rose above the horizon of human hope, spread over the moral the light of celestial truth, and the peaceful fruits of righteousness. The Sun of righteousness, Gildas informs us, (see Vol. i. p. 277, where the passage is quoted,) illumined the British isles in the days of Tiberius. The Christian religion, it has there been shewn, was imported by the Jewish converts, some of whom we may infer from Tacitus and Suetonius were banished thither by that emperor. It reflected, too, the same divine lustre upon other distant lands. The figure struck the bold imagination of our Apostle; and he imperceptibly suggests to his readers the beauty and propriety of the comparison.

know ye not what the Scripture saith concerning Elias ? how he appeareth before God with respect to Israel ; saying, Lord, they have killed thy teachers, and digged down thine altars ; so that I only am left, and they are seeking my life." 1—5. Observe the beautiful lesson of forbearance and patience, which is here delineated in the conduct of our illustrious teacher. The Apostles, like their Divine Master, were cruelly treated by their countrymen, who, not content with persecuting, sought by various ways to extirpate, this band of holy men. And in what language does the writer speak of a treatment so unfeeling and unmerited ? Does he, in direct terms, place it before his readers, and describe its atrocity in just though odious colours ? He hints indeed at the hardships to which the virtuous followers of Jesus were exposed from their brethren. But by leading their attention from the unrelenting persecutors of his own times, and fixing it on the like enemies of truth and virtue in more ancient days, he endeavours, instead of aggravating, to soften as it were with distant shades, the guilt of those who thirsted for his blood. At the very time in which he penned this paragraph, ruffians among his own nations were, he was conscious, concerting means to deprive him of existence : and all the complaint which the meek sufferer makes, is in the language of Elias, **THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.** " But what," he goes on, " is the divine answer to him ? I have left myself seven thousand men, who have not bended a knee to Baal. Accordingly at this present time also, there is a remnant chosen out by favour : and if by favour, not then

from works ; otherwise this were no longer a favour. As on the contrary, if from works, it were not then a favour ; otherwise these works would be no longer what they are. How then ? What Israel is seeking for, he hath not attained : the chosen few have attained, but the rest were blinded ; as it is written, God hath given them a spirit of stupefaction, eyes without sight, and ears that hear not, unto this day." 4—9.

Numbers among the first enemies of the Gospel, being unable to check its progress by open violence, had recourse to hypocrisy and treachery. They ranked in the number of the new converts ; and under the mask of pretended friendship, endeavoured to entangle the simple and unsuspecting in snares secretly laid for them.* One of the modes of entrapping the believer,

* This trait in the character of those among the Jews who, under the mask of pretended friendship, concealed dispositions hostile to his followers and his cause, was anticipated by our Lord : and he thus cautions his disciples against it. "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is HYPOCRISY : for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed ; neither hid that shall not be known." Luke xii. 2. See the explanation of this verse given in Vol. ii. p. 545. To the snares laid to entrap the Apostles, their Master probably alluded in the admonition, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ; and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father," Mat. x. 29. His meaning seems to be, that they should not fall into those nets laid to catch them without the notice of their Heavenly Father. In this light the words are understood by Origen, who accordingly explains *on the ground* by the phrase *in the net*. Philo, speaking of those among the Jews, who concealed their enmity against the followers of Jesus under the veil of affected friendship, uses the following language : Οἱ δὲ τὸ παρακεκίνη-
μενον καὶ λευττήκος εἰς ἕτερον εἶδος κακίας μεταρροσάμενοι, πικρῆσαν
αλεκτὸν ἐπιτηδεύσαντες, ἡσυχῇ διαλάλουντες, η̄ρημαιότερας φωνὰς
ὑποκρίσει βαρυμνην ἠθος δεικνύμενοι, κύνων ἰσβολῶν τρόπον προσσκι-
νόντες, ἀνιάτων γενομένοι κακῶν αἰτίοι, κατὰ πόλεις μνημεία τῆς

was to invite him to an entertainment, where he might be tempted through intoxication to violate the laws of sobriety and decency, and thus to furnish the adversary with crimes, which were eagerly seized and imputed without discrimination to all the faithful. This diabolical conduct, I conceive, our Apostle here obliquely notices; and in an appropriate language borrowed from David, he expresses his wish that the deceivers might fall into the very snares which they laid for the innocent, this being a recompence which they justly deserved. "And David saith: Let their table become a snare, and a net, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them. Let their eyes be darkened so as not to see, and do thou bend down their back always."* 9, 10. The last verse continues the allusion contained in the preceding. It is to this effect: "Let their eyes be so darkened as not to see the nets which they spread, and in consequence become themselves entangled in them: and let some weight, falling upon their back, keep them down, and thus prevent them from being disengaged."

The Jewish people, by rejecting their Messiah, had actually brought themselves into a state of degradation

αὐτῶν ἀσεβείας καὶ μισανθρώπιαν ἀπέλιπον, τὰς τῶν πεπονητῶν ἀληθοῦς συμφορὰς. Phil. Vol. ii. p. 459, A translation of this passage is given in Vol. ii. p. 546.

* If you look to Psalm lxix, whence this citation is taken, you will perceive, that it is chiefly occupied in enumerating the reproaches thrown upon the Psalmist by his enemies, and in offering up prayers to God for destroying them. The hardships, which the Apostle experienced from his enemies, were, I doubt not, less merited and more aggravated. But the mild spirit of his religion, and the attractive example of his forgiving Lord, prevented him from joining with the royal author in petitions dictated by malice and revenge.

and punishment similar to what is above represented. Their apostacy and subsequent disgrace occasioned an undue exultation in many of the Gentile converts, when they saw the privileges, in which their enemies had hitherto boasted, now taken away and conferred upon themselves. For this reason our author employs the remainder of this chapter, in checking that rising spirit of pride and triumph which characterised the Gnostic teachers, and in placing before their eyes certain reasons for cherishing meekness and compassion towards the Jews even in their present fallen and suffering condition.

1. First, Paul intimates that they shall not always remain in their present degraded state, but be again raised, at some future period, to the rank which they once occupied as the favourite people of God ; and that their apostacy is ordained for the advantage of the Gentiles. 11—16.

2. Abraham*, descending from a nation renowned for its antiquity and skill in astronomy, was highly venerated not only by the Jews but by other nations. In similar veneration was held the Patriarch Joseph. The people of Egypt, indeed, appear so far to have

* The honour, generally connected with the nation from whom Abraham descended, will appear upon reflection to be the circumstance which induced Philo, who wrote in a country where the greatest odium was cherished against the Jewish name, to distinguish his ancestors by the ancient title of *Chaldeans*. That *Joseph* received divine honours from the Egyptians, is a fact attested by Julius Firmicus (annexed to *Min. Fel.* p. 253), and by Augustin *De Civit. Dei*, Lib. xviii. cap. iv. See Spencer *De Legibus Hebræorum*, Lib. iii. cap. viii. Sec. ii. where these with other authorities are produced in proof of his deification.

carried their respect for his memory as to offer him divine honours under the image of *Apis*. Of the estimation in which these Jewish Patriarchs were held, Paul here reminds the Gentile converts, of whom, it is probable, the Egyptians formed the majority ; and he grounds upon it an argument, though by no means weighty in itself, well adapted to influence a people actuated by local prejudices. “ If the first fruits be holy, so is the lump : and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” 16. Which may thus be paraphrased : “ If you regard with peculiar esteem the founders of the Jewish nation, if you consider them consecrated, as it were, by the special favour of heaven, you should cherish in some degree a similar sentiment towards their descendants in modern days.

3. Paul farther dissuades the Gentile converts from exulting in their present elevation, because the privileges with which they were invested, they did not inherit as their right, but had received them through the medium of the Jews. “ And if some of the branches have been broken off ; and thou, a wild olive, hast been grafted on them, and become a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree : boast not over these branches. Though thou boast over them, thou bearest not the root ; but the root thee.” 17, 18.

4. Finally, in order to check the ungenerous and unchristian triumph of the Gentile believers over the fall of the Jews, the Apostle insinuates that they too were liable to be cut off in a similar manner, if they did not exercise a firm faith in the Gospel, and produce in their conduct the happy fruits of it. “ Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted on. Well : they were broken off for their want of

faith, and by thy faith thou standest. Be not high-minded, but afraid. For, if God spared not the natural branches, (beware) lest he spare not thee. Behold therefore the kindness and severity of God : to those that fell severity ; but kindness to thee, if thou persevere under that kindness ; otherwise thou also wilt be cut off ; as they too if they persevere not in unbelief, will be grafted on : for God is able to graft them on again. For, if thou wert cut out of thy natural wild olive, and hast been grafted against thy nature into a good olive ; how much more may these natural branches be grafted in their own olive ? ” 19—25.

A copious source of that pride, which distinguished the Gnostic teachers, was their affected superior knowledge or better acquaintance *with mysteries*. In opposition to their arrogance in this respect, Paul holds out the figure of the olive-tree into which they had been engrafted, as a mystery more worthy of their attention than any other ; since it had for its object the restraining of that self-conceit, that insolent temper which disposed them to glory in the misfortunes of their adversaries. “ For I wish you to understand, brethren, THIS MYSTERY, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that blindness hath befallen part of Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in ; and then all Israel will be saved, as it is written : The deliverer will come out of Zion,* and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

* The writer in citing this passage differs a little both from the Hebrew text and the Septuagint version. The former reads, *The Redeemer shall come INTO ZION* ; the latter, *ON ACCOUNT of Zion*, (ΕΥΕΚΕΝ ΣΙΩΝ). Instead of these our author has substituted *OUT OF SION*. His reason for so doing was, perhaps, the following : The false teachers maintained virtually that the Christ, as not being a descendant of David, did not come out of Zion. This falsehood the Apostle meets : and he op-

25, 26. He then adds. " So then as to the Gospel, the Israelites are disliked for your sakes ; but, as to the chosen of God, are beloved for their fathers' sakes," 28. From this representation, our Apostle was well aware, the impostors would be likely to draw an argument in support of the *capriciousness* and *inclemency*, which they were eager to ascribe to the God of Israel. The unjust inference Paul anticipates ; and he maintains that both the Jews and the Gentiles, though successively disobedient, shall ultimately be included in that mercy which is the darling attribute of an all-

poses to it the authority of a Jewish prophet, by deviating somewhat from the language, though not from the spirit, of his prediction. To the supposition that the Saviour did not rise from among the Jews, Paul alludes, when he puts the following question to those in the Corinthian Church who blended the Egyptian festivals with the Eucharist, (See Vol. i. p. 195.) *Did the Logos of God come forth from you ?* 1 Cor. xiv. 36. Some among the first converts in Egypt traced his pedigree to an Egyptian origin. The bishops of that country worshipped Serapis, supposing him to be the same with Christ. Vol. i. p. 269. Though Tiberius could not succeed in securing for him the honours of the Pantheon, statues in testimony of his divinity were erected in Rome and other places. The Gnostics ranked his effigy with those of Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, Iren. p. 102. To a statue erected to his honour in the metropolis, Juvenal, I conceive, thus alludes,

————— Inter quas ausus habere,
Nescio quis titulos Ægyptius —————
Cujus ad effigiem non tantum mejere fas est,

Lib. I. Sat. i. 130.

It was natural in a writer, who might know nothing of Jesus but through the medium of Egyptian representations, to stile him *Ægyptius*. The obscurity which hung over his extraction, and the contempt which the Saurist felt for his character, are pointedly expressed by the phrase *Nescio quis*. That the founder of Christianity is the person here intended, may however be doubted by my readers. But they must deem it a corroborating circumstance that, in the subsequent lines, the author, it is well known, alludes to the sufferings of his followers.

wise and benevolent Being. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye, in times past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained MERCY through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through the MERCY shewn to you, they also may obtain MERCY. For God hath shut all alike under unbelief, that he may have MERCY upon all," 29, 33. He then exclaims in a strain of glowing eloquence and holy indignation, "O the depth* of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." 33. This, you will remark,

* The original term of *depth* is *βαθος*, a name which the Gnostics applied to their supreme divinity. In allusion to this, Paul, it appears to me, employs the word in this place: and he insinuates that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which they ascribed to their god, really exist in the Creator of the world. The early catholic writers frequently use the word *βαθος* or *βυθος*, in ridicule of the absurd notion which the Gnostics affixed to that term. Thus Irenæus describes their tenets *an abyss of folly*, *βυθος της ανομιας*. p. 3. Epiphanius calls their doctrine *βυθος παναρωδης*, p. 85. In another place he stiles it *βυθος δυσοδημιας*, p. 96. The writer of the *Revelation* describes their fictions in terms no less appropriate and forcible *βαθεια του Σατανα*. "And I say unto you and the rest of them in Thyatira who hold not that doctrine, nor know the depths of Satan, as they call it." Rev. ii. 24. Our author uses the corresponding verb *βυθίζω*, in a manner equally pertinent, to characterise those men who plunged their followers in the same depth of ignorance and ruin. "They, who desire riches, fall into the trial and snare of many hurtful lusts which sink men deep in ruin and destruction." 1 Tim. vi. 9. But it was more usual with the Apostle Paul to undermine the notion of the Gnostic divinity, by connecting those ideas which its votaries affixed to the term with the true God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus he calls his *deep counsels*, *τα βαθη του Θεου*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. and Ephes. iii. 18. he holds forth the love of God in Christ under the names of *βαθος* and *υψος*, subjoining immediately, that this great Being has power beyond any other to comply with our requests, and therefore that he alone is entitled to our praise. See above p. 119.

is obviously levelled against those false teachers, who had the impiety to blaspheme the Supreme Being. The words intimate that the measures of his providence, which they arraigned, were beyond their faculties to explore or their wisdom to comprehend.

The first, who introduced these injurious sentiments of Jehovah into the Church of Christ, was the impostor of Samaria. So appropriate to Simon and his followers is the description which one of the inspired penmen of Judea had given of certain false prophets, who would delude the people, that the Apostle directs their attention to the context; and he leads them with great skill to recognise in it an accurate picture of their own character. "And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria: they prophesied in Baal and caused my people Israel to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a filthy thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies, they strengthen also the hands of evil doers, that none doth return from his wickedness.— Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? Who hath marked his word and heard it?" Jer. xxiii. 13—19. The last verse of which is thus cited by our Apostle: "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor." 34. The writer concludes with asserting that all things

proceed from God, that by his energies all things are conducted, and in him all things will ultimately terminate; and, therefore, to him, and not to the unknown God of Simon Magus or any other pretended divinity, our praise is ever due. “For from him, and by him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen.”

The Apostle, having at length finished the argumentative part of his subject, proceeds to enjoin on the Roman converts the cultivation of all the divine, social and personal virtues, as the genuine and indispensable effects of that faith which, in opposition to the Zealots, he had been enforcing. His moral precepts are various, concise and forcible: but what gives them unrivalled beauty and propriety, is the circumstance that the vices, against which they were directed, were practised by numbers in the Roman Church, and especially by the Gnostic teachers.

In the first place, Paul endeavours, by an affectionate appeal to that attribute of God which the anti-apostolic instructors called in question, to withdraw their attention from unmeaning and useless ceremonies, and to fix it upon purity of mind and body, as the only ceremony which was rational in itself and acceptable to the Deity: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by these compassionate kindnesses, to present your bodies for a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing unto God; that religious service of reason which ye owe.” 1. 2. He next cautions them against blending their Christian principles with the philosophy, and accommodating their behaviour to the manners, of the age; errors to which all the believers were necessarily prone, and

into which they were still more likely to be betrayed by their false guides. "And conform not to this age, but put on a different form (consisting) in the renovation of your mind, that ye may know (from experience) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Observe the important particulars implied in this sentence. It inculcates that the true Gospel required of its votaries *a change*, not merely of the *outward behaviour* but also of the *mind*; that the will of God, very differently from the representation which the deceivers gave of it, was GOOD, ACCEPTABLE and PERFECT, that is, good in itself, and such as commanded the approbation of a person whose rational faculties were *ripe or matured* in knowledge and virtue, though not indeed of him, whose understanding was yet unenlightened, whose heart was still debased by the impurities of sin.

His next admonition is levelled against that pride, or undue estimation of their own qualifications, which being derived from the Gnostics too generally infected the Roman converts: and in order the more effectually to suppress the arrogance of vain, though self-delegated teachers, he reminds them of the divine commission under which he spoke and acted. "For by the authority which hath been given unto me, I charge every one among you not to think more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober-mindedness according as God hath distributed to each a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all these members have not the same office; so we, though many, are but one body in Christ; and each of us severally fellow-members thereof. And as we have different gifts according to the favour shewn to us, if to

explain the Scriptures, let it be agreeable to the faith ; if a ministry, let us attend to this ministry ; let the teacher attend to his teaching ; him that exhorteth to his exhortation : let him that bestoweth, bestow liberally ; him that ruleth, rule with diligence ; him that sheweth mercy, shew it with chearfulness. Let your love be without dissimulation ; abhor evil, cleave to goodness. Let your affection for each other be the affection of a brother." 3—10.

The impostors, if they led their followers to be at all active, led them to be active in trifling or in pernicious things ; to be fervent in the indulgence of sensual desires, or in the performance of external rites, and not in the cultivation of those virtues, to which the spiritual doctrine adopted by the Apostles was subservient ; and to be servants of their own bellies, and not of him whom, though acknowledged to be the Christ, they rejected as their Lord. In reference to these features in their character, it appears to me, the following admonitions are delivered. " Be active in what is of importance, fervid in the spirit (in the spiritual doctrine), **SERVE THE LORD.**" After this he exhorts them to rejoice not in any fancied privileges of their own, but in the hope placed before them by the Gospel ; patiently to submit to affliction on account of the faith ; to practise charity and hospitality ; to exercise meekness towards those, who curse and injuriously treat them ; to sympathise with the distresses and with the joys of others ; to cherish sentiments of unanimity and humility ; to abstain from vanity and revenge ; and finally to pursue things that are honourable in the sight of all men—that are sanctioned as laudable by universal approbation. 12—18. He then

subjoins, "As much as lieth in you, be at peace with all men. Beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give way to the wrathful; for it is written: Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy be hungry, give him food; if he be thirsty, give him drink, for by doing this, thou mayest heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

18—21.

The erroneous notions, which the first converts entertained respecting the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, as they were hence led improperly to interfere in the affairs of the government, were the principal, if not the only, source of the calamities that befel the Jews and Egyptians in Rome. (Vol. i. p. 157—161.) The enemies, on whose heads the sufferers sought, by way of revenge, to heap coals of fire, and towards whom the Apostle exhorts them to return good for evil, were probably their persecutors, or those who concurred with the Senate in effecting their punishment and expulsion. The train of our author's ideas, therefore, led him in the next place to lay before the Church, some wise and salutary admonitions, respecting the conduct which each individual should pursue with regard to the Roman government. "Let every soul submit

CHAP. XIII. itself to powers in authority: for as there is no power but from God, these powers are appointed by God. Whosoever, therefore, setteth himself against the power, opposeth the appointment of God; and such opposers will bring punishment upon themselves." The mistaken views of the refractory, and the late measures adopted by the state, form the only clue which can unfold the true intent of the preceding pa-

paragraph. It may be paraphrased in the following words: "Conceiving the kingdom of the Messiah alone to be of divine appointment, you oppose the established government, disturb the public peace, and interrupt the administration of justice. But the supposition is as mistaken as it is pernicious. All power, to whatever hands entrusted, is communicated by the Disposer of human events for the purpose of doing good; and this end it shall, under his providence, eventually accomplish. And though pride, ambition and avarice, may abuse the authority invested in them for the attainment of their respective objects, yet this very abuse Infinite Wisdom will overrule, and in the end render subservient to the introduction and establishment of that glorious liberty which awaits the children of God. Resist not, therefore, by violence or any other unlawful means, those who bear the sword of justice; but rather submit to their decisions, as in effect the decisions of an all-wise and good Providence." Such is the signification of a passage perverted by policy and priestcraft into an engine which, for many ages, irresistibly held mankind in oppression, ignorance and superstition.

The governors of the provinces, conformably to the imperial edict, protected the virtuous and peaceful believer, but punished with rigour those impostors who disturbed the public tranquillity, or were otherwise guilty of fraud and plunder. This equitable conduct of the government contributed greatly to the security and edification of the yet infant church, (Vol. i. p. 166—170.) and forms the basis on which is grounded the following just tribute of praise to the civil magistrates. "These rulers are not a terror TO THE

GOOD, but TO EVIL DOERS. Dost thou wish then not to be afraid of their power? Do what is right, and thou wilt be praised by it: for it is God's minister for thy good. BUT, IF THOU DO EVIL, BE AFRAID; because this power carrieth not the sword in vain: for it is the minister of God executing punishment UPON EVERY ONE THAT DOETH EVIL.* 3—4. "Wherefore," adds our author, "it is necessary that ye submit yourselves not only because of punishment, but even for conscience sake. And for the same reason pay ye tribute also; for they who attend to

* This is not the only place in which Paul, I conceive, alludes to the edict of Tiberius, and to the equitable conduct pursued by the prefects in punishing the guilty, while they left unmolested the peaceable and virtuous among the followers of Jesus. Speaking of the Cerinthians, or those who supported ritual observances and practised carnal things, in opposition to the Apostolic teachers, who adopted the metaphorical interpretation of the law and inculcated faith in Jesus as the medium of moral purification, he thus addresses the *Galatians*: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest: They are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, image-worship, magic, enmities, strifes, rivalries, passions, quarrels, separations, divisions, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: concerning which I tell you beforehand, as indeed I told you heretofore, that the doers of such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit (of those who embrace the spiritual doctrine) is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: AGAINST SUCH THINGS AS THESE THERE IS NO LAW, Gal. v. 18—24. To the same edict our author had perhaps an eye, when he thus writes to Timothy i. 9. concerning those who taught *other doctrines*: "No law lieth against a good man, but against lawless and ungovernable, ungodly and sinful men, unholy and impure, murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, murderers of others, whoremongers, men of unnatural lusts, enslavers of mankind, deceivers, false-swearers, and whatever else is contrary to the wholesome doctrine of that glorious gospel of the holy God, with which I am entrusted." The author of the *Recognitions* asserts, in direct terms, that such a law was promulgated by the emperor against the maleficent devotees of magic. See Vol. ii. p. 247, 248, where the passage is quoted. That Tiberius did dispatch an

this business, are public servants of God. Render, therefore, to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; reverence to whom reverence ; honour to whom honour," 5, 6, 7.

The men, whose ill-behaviour excited the attention and provoked the resentment of the government, were (we have already seen, Anal. p. 32.) guilty of adultery, of stealing, and of other similar atrocities, and consequently entire strangers to that love of their neighbour, which it is the grand end of the Christian Law to produce, and which being produced, the main object of it is answered. Our Apostle, having informed the converts in general how to act with respect to the civil rulers, adverts to those among them whose misconduct had betrayed them into error, and in reference to the crimes laid to their charge delivers the following beautiful admonition : "Owe no man any thing but mutual love ; for he, who loveth his neighbour, hath fully performed the law : For these commandments, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false testimony, Thou shalt not covet, and every other commandment is comprehended in this precept, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. He who loveth, worketh no ill to his neighbour : love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law." 8, 9, 10.

The impostors, it has been shewn, (Vol. i. p. 196, 312.) frequented nocturnal festivals, at which, after

edict of this kind to the provinces, whereby he commanded their respective governors to protect the virtuous professors of the new faith, and to punish only the guilty, is attested by Philo Vol. ii. p. 569 ; by Tertullian, Apol. cap. 5 ; by Orosius, Lib. vii. cap. 4, and also by Eusebius Eccles. His. Lib. ii. cap. 2.

eating and drinking to excess, they abandoned themselves, under the covert of darkness, to licentious indulgences with those women of rank and fortune, whose ignorance or depravity rendered them the easy prey of imposture. The peculiar garments which they wore on those occasions, with other instruments and utensils of superstition, Suetonius expressly informs us, were all burnt at the command of the emperor.* These singular and horrid features, our author here recognizes : and as the shades of Pagan superstition and vice were now drawing to a close, and the light of Christian knowledge and virtue was already dawning on the world, he exhorts the believers to avoid the dark assemblies of their deceivers, and the deeds which in secret they performed ; to hold their meetings not in the night but in the day ; to assume a dress and deportment suitable to those who walked in the light ; and instead of associating with revellers, debauchees, and such nightly marauders, to follow the *Lord Jesus*, and clothe themselves with the innocence and purity of his character : “ Considering the season, that it is now time to arise from sleep ; for our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand : let us lay aside, therefore, the works of darkness, and put upon us the garments of light. Let us go about decently, (in a decent dress) not with revellers† and drunkards, not with

* The following are his own words : *Externas ceremonias, Ægyptios Judaicosque ritus compescuit, coactis, qui superstitione ea tenebantur, RELIGIOSAS VESTES CUM INSTRUMENTO OMNI COMBURERE.* Tib. cap. 36.

† It is usual with all writers, prosaic as well as poetical, to use the *abstract* for the *concrete*, or to call the person, which is the subject, of

fornicators and the wanton, not with the litigious and the malicious, but clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ," 11, 12, 13. The men here alluded to, planned in the light of day those projects of sensual gratification and revenge, which the hours of darkness enabled them to accomplish. The Apostle enjoins upon his Christian readers not to follow their example in this respect, "Do not preconcert carnal schemes to gratify your lusts."

From a passage of Seneca, (see Vol. i. p. 181.) it has been inferred that, upon the introduction of the Christian doctrine into Rome, a dispute arose respecting the lawfulness of eating the flesh of certain animals.

discourse by the name of his leading *quality*. This mode of speech is frequently adopted by the Apostle Paul. Thus in Chap. xii. 19, he writes *δοτε τοπον τη οργη*, Give place to the anger, i. e. the angry. Again in the subsequent chapter, ver. 10. he says, *the love* (i. e. the man who loves) *worketh his neighbour no evil*. Cicero, in a similar manner, uses (De officiis Lib. i. Sec. 14.) *beneficentia* for *beneficus*. Ignatius in his Epistle to the Trallians prettily says to them, "Not only I, but the benevolence of Jesus, (i. e. the *benevolent* Jesus) exhorts you to abstain from the foreign plant which is heresy," Cap. vi. On the same principle Paul calls (Chap. i. ver. 18.) impious and unjust men *ασεβεια και αδικια ανθρωπων*; and Chap. xiii. he characterises the civil ruler as *φοβος κακων εργαων*, a terror of evil works, i. e. of evil workers. Hence it was that the Magistrate, who administered justice which is the end of government, was often called *τελος*. To this use of the term Paul, perhaps, alludes when he stiles Christ, who is the Supreme law-giver in the Christian Church, *τελος νομου the end of the law*, Rom. x. 4. Conformably to this practice we are, I conceive, to take *revelings, drunkenness, &c.* as the abstract of *revellers, drunkards, &c.* Accordingly I have thus rendered the text. See, if you please, Clem. Alexan. Vol. i. p. 628, and Tertul. p. 327. where the former gives a good explanation of, and the latter makes a fine allusion to this passage of our Apostle.

CHAP. XIV. This dispute called forth the animadversion of our great Apostle. "Kindly receive the weak in faith, not unto doubts and reasonings. For one scrupletly not to eat any thing; but another that is weak eateth only herbs," 1, 2. Having noticed this subject of controversy, he invites the member that had the freedom from prejudice, and enlargement of mind to eat any thing clean, and him that had not such freedom and enlargement, to practise mutual candor, to abstain from that furious bigotry, that censorious temper, which disposed them to pass upon each other the sentence of condemnation. This liberal admonition, he enforces by reminding the contending parties, that they were the subjects of one and the same Master; that they were invested with no authority that qualified them to pronounce upon their respective merits, but were alike responsible for whatever they did, and whatever they did not, to a common Lord. 3—13.

Every man, observes he, is to be governed by his own conscience: and though the generous spirit of the Gospel regards nothing in itself unholy, nothing unfit for use, yet the person who indulges this freedom in cases, which give pain and offence to a less enlightened brother, cannot be influenced by the principle of Christian benevolence. "Therefore let us not judge each other any more; but do ye rather determine this, not to put a stumbling block or a hinderance before your brother. I know, and am satisfied that under the Lord Jesus no meat is of itself unholy; but to him who thinketh any meat unholy, to him it is unholy. Now if thy brother be made uneasy by thy meat, thou no longer walkest according to love." 13—16.

Those of the Jewish converts, who embraced the sentiments of *Cerinthus*, eat without scruple of every species of flesh, and even joined with the * Pagans in those festivals which they celebrated in honour of their gods. In this they acted consistently with the views entertained by them respecting the kingdom of the Messiah: for the happiness they expected to enjoy therein, consisted not in the refined pleasures of knowledge, virtue and benevolence, but in eating, drinking, and other sensual indulgences. This gross and pernicious mistake the Apostle here rectifies. "Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. Let not, then, our privilege be an occasion of reproach: *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in a holy mind.*† For he, who serves Christ in these things, is well pleasing to God and approved by men," 15—19. The Cerinthians, I have observed, partook of those feasts which the heathens consecrated to their divinities, or of those sacrifices which they offered to *idols*. This appears to have been the latitude in the use of food, which gave so much offence to the catholic believers, or to use their own language, (for Paul copied it from them) caused their *weak brother to stum-*

* The fathers are unanimous in their testimony to this fact, and their testimony is corroborated by the writings of the Apostles; *ειδωλοθυτα αδιαφορως εσθιουσιν* are the words of Irenæus, p. 30. Paul, we shall see, animadverts on the practice of the Gnostics in this respect, in his first letter to the Corinthians. See Chap. viii.

† The propriety of these words will be felt with peculiar force, if you consult a passage of Theodoret concerning the Cerinthians. *Hæc. Fab. Lib. ii. 4.* It is quoted at large in Vol. ii. p. 369, 370. There it is shewn, that the Jews with whom our Lord discoursed, as recorded John Chap. viii. were the followers of Cerinthus.

ble. And this is the reason why the Apostle calls upon them to abstain from offending, by such indiscriminate and suspicious indulgence, the tender consciences of the more scrupulous converts: "So then let us strive for peace, and for the improvement of each other. Pull not to pieces the workmanship of God because of meat. All things indeed are pure: but it is bad for that man who maketh others stumble by what he eateth. It is better neither to eat flesh nor drink wine, nor to do any thing else at which thy brother stumbleth," 19, 20, 22. But I have a conviction, might reply the licentious, that I can thus eat and drink without incurring guilt. In answer to this the Apostle observes, that a man might safely do any thing, the practice of which in his own estimation was not criminal; but if deemed otherwise by the less enlightened, he ought to confine the conviction and the practice to God and to himself: "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself in the presence of God. Happy is he who condemneth not himself for his own practices." 22. That man alone, adds our liberal author, is guilty of sin, who gratifies himself contrary to the dictates of his conscience." But he who doubteth is condemned, if he eat, because it is not done with conviction; for whatever is done without a conviction (of its lawfulness) is sin," 23.

Paul, in the next place, reminds the more free in their sentiments, that they were under obligation to bear with the infirmities of their weaker brethren; that the object of all their desires should be whatever is good in itself, and whatever tends to mutual edification: and this obligation he enforces by the well known example of Christ, who in all instances sought

the gratification of others in preference to his own. " We therefore, who are able, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us then please his neighbour in what is good for mutual improvement. For Christ, in like manner, did not consider his own gratification, but as it is written, the reproaches of them, that revile thee, fell on me."*

The Jewish, no less than the Egyptian Gnostics, rejected their sacred writings, and those parts of them in particular, which were interpreted as predicting the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and enjoining upon his followers the necessity of a meek submission to pain, reproaches, and hardship, in the promotion of his cause. The writer, having quoted a very pertinent passage from those writings, takes this occasion to correct so dangerous an error, and to hold them forth to public view as written for their moral edification, or as affording to the disciples of him, in whose death they were accomplished, examples of persevering virtue, and assurances of consolatory hope. " For whatsoever things were aforetime written, were written for our

* It has been observed that the inhabitants of Rome formed their ideas of Christ from the character of those impostors, who pretended to believe in him and to teach his religion. Vol. ii. p. 96, 97. This was very natural in men who had no previous knowledge of our Lord. Hence they necessarily attached to his character all the odium and reproach which his pretended followers but too well merited. Here then was a memorable instance in which the holy Jesus was vilified through the misconduct of his false disciples. Of this circumstance our Apostle with great address and delicacy reminds them in the following words, quoted from Ps. lxi. 9: THE REPROACHS OF THEM, THAT REVILE THEE, FELL ON ME.

instruction ; that through the (encouragement to) perseverance, and through the consolation (afforded) from the Scriptures, we may retain the hope," that is, the object of our hope. 4. To this our benevolent author subjoins the following fervent prayer in behalf of the church : " Now the God of this (encouragement to) perseverance and of this consolation, grant that ye may cherish the same sentiments towards each other, according to Christ Jesus ; so that with one mind and with one mouth ye may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." 5, 6. The hæretical teachers maintained, that the Scriptures proceeded from a subordinate evil angel, and not from the Supreme God. In opposition to this, Paul holds forth the Deity as the God of those Scriptures : and he invests them with those qualities of forbearance and consolation which are the characteristics of a benevolent Being. Again, they insisted that the author of the law or the Creator of the world, was different from the God and Father of Christ, and that he was an object deserving of blasphemy not of praise. To these notions the prayer of our author stands opposed. THAT WITH ONE MIND AND ONE MOUTH YE MAY GLORIFY THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. The clause *according to Christ Jesus* is levelled against the distinction which they made between Christ and the man Jesus : and hence we see what were the fundamental points, respecting which he wished the Roman Church to maintain unanimity of sentiment. They were these, that the author of the Jewish dispensation was no other than the author of the Gospel ; that he it was, who from motives of benevolence commissioned his Son to save mankind, and therefore merits their praises and not

their maledictions; and finally, that he who really expired on the cross, and rose from the dead as the pledge of the resurrection of all his virtuous followers to a new and better existence, was himself the Messiah.

The followers of Cerinthus, of whom the Judaizing Zealots at Rome appear to have chiefly consisted, were tenacious of the rite of circumcision, and unwilling to extend the blessings of the Gospel to the Gentiles, unless they previously submitted to its operation. These he exhorts to relax in their zeal for a circumcision which was now superseded, and to submit to a more real and divine circumcision, namely, a circumcision of the heart, of which Jesus Christ was the minister, and which was the mean of realizing the promise made to the fathers. “Wherefore kindly receive one another, as Christ also received you, to the glory of God: (receive one another) I mean in that real* and divine circumcision of which Jesus Christ

* The clause in the original is as follows, Λεγω δε Ιησουν Χριστον διακονον γεγενησθαι περιτομης υπερ αληθειας Θεου. Which literally rendered is thus, *I say that Jesus Christ became a minister of circumcision for the truth of God, i. e. minister for the true circumcision of God, or for that circumcision which is true, real, and divine.* The word αληθεια means not only *truth* in opposition to *falsehood*, but also the *reality* in opposition to its *type* or *shadow*. See Vol. ii. p. 206, 207, 208. Thus the circumcision of the body was deemed by our Apostle, as but the shadow or symbol of the circumcision of the heart. For this reason, the latter is called αληθεια, *the true or real circumcision*, in the same manner as Christ is stiled (John i. 17.) *the truth* or *reality* of the Mosaic law, in contradistinction to its external forms by which he was presignified. Be it here remarked that Philo, who wrote and acted as the great ally of the Apostles, adopted the metaphorical signification annexed by them to the term circumcision; and that, in a short treatise which he composed on the subject, he represents the circumcision of the body as symbolical of the circumcision of the heart. His own

became the minister, to confirm the promises unto the fathers." 7, 8. The prophets were authorised to predict the conversion of the Gentiles on the condition of amendment, and their reception by the Divine mercy, without submitting to those ordinances which had separated them from the Israelites. "Of which Jesus Christ became the minister to confirm the promises unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles were to glorify God for his mercy; as it is written: For this cause I will acknowledge thee among the Gentiles, and sing praise unto thy name. And again, the Scripture saith: Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Sing unto the Lord all ye Gentiles; and praise him all ye people. And again, Isaiah saith: Out of Jesse will be the root, and he, who riseth up to rule the Gentiles: on whom the Gentiles will hope." 8—13.

Having finished his admonitions to the Roman converts, he delivers this petition in their behalf. "May the God of this hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in the (Christian) hope, through the power of the holy Spirit," 13. For the freedom with which he spoke his sentiments, and his delay in coming to see them, he makes the following beautiful and interesting apology. "And I my-

words in part are, *Εγω δε συμβολον ηγουμαι την περιτομην—ηδων εκτομης αι καταγοητουςι την διανοιαν.* The circumstance which renders the circumcision of the body a proper figure to typify that of the heart, he describes to be, *την προς καρδιαν ομοιοτητα του περιτμηθευτος μερους.* This interpretation, he tells us, he had received from certain divine interpreters of the Mosaic law, (meaning the first preachers of the Gospel) of whose persons and doctrine he yet, it seems probable, had no knowledge but from report. *Ταυτα μεν ουν εις ακοης ηλθε ημετερας, αεχχιολογουμενα παρα θεσπεισις ανδρασιν, δι να Μωσweis ου παρεγγως δισημνηυσαν.* Vol. ii. p. 211.

self also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are even of yourselves full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able even to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, by way of reminding you, I have written to you rather freely upon some points, through the authority given to me by God, in making me a public servant of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, a ministering priest of this gospel of God; that this oblation of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by holiness of spirit. I have therefore cause of boasting in Christ Jesus towards God. For I will only presume to speak of what Christ hath done by me for the conviction of the Gentiles by word and deed, by mighty signs and wonders, by a powerful display of God's Spirit. So that from Jerusalem round about even to Illyrium, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ. So ambitious have I been to publish the Gospel! Not where the name of Christ had already reached, lest I should build upon the foundation of another; but, as it is written, They who have not been told of him shall see; and they who have not heard shall understand. Therefore, though I have often been hindered from coming to you, yet now, as I have no farther scope * in these parts, and have been de-

* Or as it might be rendered, *I have no more room in these parts.* The Apostle describes his success in propagating Christianity in those countries, under the figure of an architect occupying the ground all around with buildings: and he intimates that the Gospel of Christ, like one grand edifice, overspread the whole land from Jerusalem and around about even to Illyrium. There being no more room to lay a new foundation, he was enabled at length to visit Rome and Spain. And here be it remarked that the intention, which Paul now expresses of going to this latter country, affords, notwithstanding what has been said by some learned men to the contrary, (see Lard. Vol. vi. p. 294) a strong presumptive inference that he actually did go and there preach

sirous of coming to you these many years, I will come to you whenever I go to Spain." 14—24.

The conveying of the Gospel to that remote and barbarous country would, he was well aware, be attended with much difficulty, danger and expence. In order to render this design practicable, it was expedient that some persons in the Roman Church, acquainted with those parts, and respected for their property and virtue, should accompany him thither; and that a contribution should be made among the believers towards defraying the expences of his journey. And with a view to stimulate the rich * to contribute by pecuniary assistance to the support of their poorer brethren, and to the progress of the Gospel, he delicately sets before them the example of the other Gentile churches,—“ I will come to you whenever I go to Spain. For I hope to see you on my passage, and to be conducted by you thither, when I have been furnished in part by you. But now am I going to Jerusalem on a service to the saints: for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make

the Gospel. This inference is much corroborated by the fact, that it was actually promulgated in Spain not many years after the composition of this epistle, as appears from a monumental inscription dedicated to Nero, for his attempt to extirpate the teachers of a *new superstition*. It is, moreover, confirmed by the express testimony of Clement of Rome, who in his epistle to the Corinthians (chap. v.) writes, that Paul taught the whole world righteousness even as far as the limits of the west, (*ἐπι τελευτα της δυνατεις*) which could only mean Spain and Portugal. This fact is also attested by Theodoret in his Commentary on Ps. cxvi; by Cyril Catech. xvii; by Jerom in his Ecclesiastical writers, and by many others.

* This observation has not escaped the discernment of Origen, who in his comment on the place says, *Subtiliter et verecunde dum laudat Corinthios, hortatur Romanos. Facilius enim devotæ mentes ad benefaciendum exemplis quam sermonibus invitantur.*

a contribution for the poor Saints in Jerusalem. And it is well they have so pleased; for they are indeed debtors to those Jews: because if the Gentiles have shared their spiritual gifts, they ought in return to minister unto them these carnal gifts. When, therefore, I have finished this business, and set the seal to this fruit of their liberality, I will pass through you to Spain." 23—29. In compensation for the favours which he might receive from them, he expresses his confidence, that he should come to them in full possession of those miraculous endowments which had hitherto sanctioned his preaching. And he further endeavours to interest the Roman converts in his behalf, by joining him in prayer to God, that he might be defended against those who sought to destroy him, and his services prove acceptable to his prejudiced and mistaken brethren. "And I know that when I come to you, I shall come with the full blessings of the Gospel of Christ. Now I beseech you, brethren! by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the spirit, to strive together with me by prayers to God in my behalf, that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judæa, and that this service of mine for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints;* that I

* Even those of the Jews, whom the Apostles had converted to the faith, still adhered to the external forms of the law with a fond conviction of their perpetuity. They were, therefore, inflamed with illiberal prejudices against our Apostle, when they found that he invited the Gentiles to share in the blessings of the Gospel, without urging the necessity of submitting to the rites of Moses, as the chief mean of obtaining the divine favour. Now the principal motive which, perhaps induced our Apostle to engage in the service above alluded to, was to assuage the unreasonable prepossessions of his countrymen. He was too well acquainted with the spirit of his religion, and the laws of the human mind, not to know that the most sure way to disarm the bigotry

may come to you with joy by the will of God, and refresh myself with you. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." 29—33.

The Apostle, in the last place, salutes those of his acquaintance among the believers. But these salutations are not to be regarded merely as expressions of attachment to the persons specified, but also recommendations of them, on account of their superior purity in principle and in conduct, to the notice and imitation of the converts in general. Thus he intimates in the recommendation of *Phæbe*, that women however poor, if honest, industrious, and useful, are more worthy of reception among them, than those ladies of rank and fortune who led a debased and useless life.

CHAP. XVI.

"I recommend unto you Phæbe our sister, a servant of the Church at Cenchrea: that you may receive her in the Lord, in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatsoever business she may want your help." 1, 2. Thus also in his salutation of Priscilla and Aquila, he calls upon the church to esteem and to imitate those who by their sufferings and labours contributed to the welfare of their brethren, and to the promotion of their common cause. "Salute Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow labourers in Christ Jesus, who have laid down their necks for my life: unto whom

and conciliate the good will of his adversaries was to confer upon them personal favours. There existed some danger, however, lest a contribution offered by a person so obnoxious, should be rejected even by those among the believers that stood in need of relief. Hence it was a matter of great solicitude with our benevolent Apostle, that his service should be acceptable to them. *Τους δεχομενους*, writes Theodoret, *αγωνια, μη το μισος νικηση την χρεϊαν*, i. e. *He struggled with those who received (the contribution), lest their hatred should prevail over their want.*

not only I give thanks, but all the churches of the Gentiles." 3, 4. Knowing that they did not, like the false teachers, distinguish between Jesus and the Christ, but preached the faith in its full purity, he salutes the little society in their family; and hence intimates that the communication of religious instruction in their own house, was a practice laudable in itself, and worthy of being imitated by others: "Salute likewise the church in their house."

Though the impostors professed Christ, they neither acted nor suffered in his cause. In allusion to this circumstance, which furnished the best criterion to distinguish the false from the true professor, our author characterises those, whom he salutes as brethren in Christ, by an epithet expressive of their zeal and activity in his service.* "Salute Priscilla and Aquila,

* The Apostle Paul appears disposed to disclaim all connection with those, who had not the magnanimity, even in the face of danger, toil and want, to employ their personal exertions in the propagation of the new faith. His conduct in respect to John Mark is a remarkable instance of this disposition. That disciple attended him in his first journey to preach the Gospel. But his timidity prevented him from taking a conspicuous and active part in this new and perilous engagement. He was, therefore, content with following his illustrious leader, administering to his personal wants, or assisting him in the subordinate parts of his duty. See Acts xiii. 5. In this however he had not the courage to persevere, but, when he now became sensible of the trials which awaited them, and of the dangers by which they were surrounded, forsakes his master and returns to Jerusalem. His desertion excited the indignation of our magnanimous Apostle, and he disdains to take with him, a second time, a man who had abandoned his post in the season of danger, and who, from the suggestions of fear and pusillanimity, declined *to work* for the promotion of their common cause. "Paul thought it right not to take with him one, who had apostatised from them in Pamphylia, and who did not co-operate with them *in the work*." Acts xv. 39. This was the ground of the dispute between him and his friend

my fellow labourers in Christ Jesus—Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and *my fellow prisoners*, who are *of note among the Apostles*, and professed Christ before me—Salute Urbanus *my fellow labourer* in Christ—Salute Apelles the *approved in Christ*,” i. e. the sincerity of whose faith was tried by sufferings. In opposition, finally, to the deceivers who rejected Christ as their Lord, he sends his salutation to those among the Roman converts, who in an eminent manner acknowledged him under that character, and who in an eminent degree obeyed his precepts and followed his example: “Salute the family of Aristobulus; salute Herodian my kinsman; salute those of the family of Narcissus, that are IN THE LORD. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who are labouring IN THE LORD. Salute the beloved Persis, who hath laboured much IN THE LORD. Salute Rufus, the chosen IN THE LORD.” 10—14.

Having finished these salutations he adds, “Salute each other with a holy kiss. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are making these divisions and laying these stumbling-blocks, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned: and avoid them. For such men are not servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of their own belly; and by fine words, and by fair speeches, are deceiving the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all: I rejoice therefore in you on this account, and wish you to be wise unto goodness, and uncorrupt concerning evil: and the God of peace will quickly trample Satan under

and companion Barnabas; which dispute, however, was no more than a temporary irritation, the only effect of which was that they took a different route.

your feet. The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." 16—21.

The early Christians in token of their mutual love, adopted the custom of saluting each other upon parting from their assemblies.* This custom well accorded with the principles of the Gnostics, who seem to have practised it in their nocturnal festivals as affording, under the pretext of expressing their spirit of Christian benevolence, an opportunity for gratifying their impure desires. So prevalent was this practice become in Rome, that it attracted the attention of the emperor who, about the time in which he expelled the Christians, published an edict to prohibit it.† This custom our author was here naturally led to notice: and against the abuses, of which it was made the instrument, he delivers the following admonition: SALUTE ONE ANOTHER WITH A HOLY KISS: As though he had said, "Let your salutation of each other be the expression of pure and spiritual benevolence, and not the dictate of gross and carnal desires."

* This custom was not peculiar to the Gnostics, but was generally practised by the Catholic believers, *Φιληματι αλληλους ασπαζομεθα*. They are the words of Justin Martyr. See *Hammond* on the place.

† *Quotidiana oscula prohibuit edicto Suet. Tib. 34*. Their practice of thus saluting each other, though prevalent in other places, prevailed mostly in their religious banquets: and this is the reason why Suetonius connects the narrative of it with *sollenniibus canis*. This also led our author, after delivering the above admonition to salute one another with a holy kiss, to remark that the deceivers served not the Lord Jesus but their OWN BELLIES. I do not, however mean to affirm, that the custom originated with the Christians in Rome, or that it was practised by them alone. The prevalence of it is ridiculed in very strong and descriptive terms by Martial, Lib. xi. 98.

The train of the Apostle's ideas being now fixed upon those deceivers, who by their falsehoods occasioned divisions in the bosom of the church, and thus furnished the adversary with pretences for vilifying the Christians and their cause, adverts to them in the following manner: "I beseech you, brethren, mark those who make divisions and bring offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." It has frequently been observed that, though they acknowledged the Christ in the person of Jesus, they did not submit to the latter as their Lord, or confess their obligation to obey his precepts and imitate his example; and in truth the festivals instituted to celebrate his divinity, they frequented from motives of sensuality. These facts are plainly implied in the succeeding sentence. FOR SUCH MEN ARE NOT SERVANTS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BUT OF THEIR OWN BELLY.*

Representing the Christ as a *good demon* descended from heaven for the benefit of mankind, they changed his official name of *Christus* into *Chrestus*, an epithet expressive of the benignity of his character, and descriptive of those benevolent spirits supposed

* The assertion of our Apostle, that they did not serve the *Lord Jesus*, is attested also by Irenæus, who writes that they were unwilling to give him the name of *Lord*. Ουδε Κυριον ονομαζειν αυτον θελουσι, p. 9. In p. 31. this writer uses the very words which Paul employs in this place. Οι δε ταις σαρκος ηδοναις δουλευοντες τα σαρκικα τοις σαρκικοις— αποδιδουσαι λεγουσι. και οι μιν λαθηρα τας διδασκομενας υπ αυτων την διδαχην ταυτην γυναικας διαφθειρουσι, &c. The Apostle speaking of the same men in his letter to the *Philippians* (Chap. iii. 19) has these very remarkable words, *Whose God is their belly*. By which he meant that those festivals, in which they pretended to celebrate the divinity of their Christ, were in reality frequented to gratify their lusts. In this sense their God was truly their belly.

to be employed under God in the service of the human race. See Vol. i. p. 263, 264. Accordingly this appears to have been the title by which the enemies and the friends of Christianity in Gentile countries at first distinguished its illustrious founder.* The deceivers, moreover, composed certain oracles which they ascribed to the Sibyl in respect to Jesus Christ. These of course they called *λογια* (*logia*), a name usually applied to express the dictates of divine inspiration.

* To this name of Christ signifying *good* or *kind*, Justin thus alludes, *Ὅσον τε εκ του κατηγορουμενου ημων ονοματος χρησοτατοι υπαρχομεν.* Apol. i. p. 6. In the next page he for the same reason calls the Christians *χρησιανοι*: and then he adds, *το δε χρησον μισεισθαι ου δικιον.* To this signification Tertullian also alludes, when he thus writes (Apolog. Cap. iii.) concerning the Christian name: *De Suavitate vel benignitate compositum, Oditur itaque in hominibus innocuis nomen innocuum.* Eusebius refers to the same interpretation in stiling it *παντιμος και ενδοξος προσηγορια*, Hist. Eccles. Lib. v. Cap. i. Lactantius ascribes the change to the ignorance of the Greeks—*Qui propter ignorantium errorem, eum immutata litera Chrestum solent dicere*, Lib. iv. Cap. 7. But Lactantius himself is to be charged with ignorance, or rather with *duplicity*: for he could not but know, that an alteration in the name, calculated to screen the person intended from unmerited odium, or to express his character as a superior being, must have originated with the real or at least the pretended friends of Christ. His enemies, however, often applied to him the name thus altered. Suetonius thus stiles him in the life of Claudius, Cap. 25. Lucian, in a book entitled *Philopatris*, represents Critias asking Triephton, who professed to be a Christian, Whether the affairs of the Scythians were recorded in heaven, and receiving for answer: “All nations are there recorded, since Chrestus exists even among the Gentiles.” *Παντα, ει τυχοι γε χρηστος και εν εθνεσι.* Vol. ii. p. 773. Julian the Apostate, in derision of the Evangelist John, whom he supposes to have first taught the divinity of Christ, calls him *χρηστος Ιωαννης*. See Vol. i. p. 269—273. And, finally, Aristides, the sophist, in a passage known to refer to the followers of Jesus (See Lard. Vol. viii. p. 85.), stigmatises them as *παντων αχρησοτατοι.*

See Vol. i. p. 272. and p. 34 of this Analysis. The simple supper, be it farther remarked, which our Lord appointed in commemoration of his suffering and death, the impostors perverted into a heathen feast, which they affected to solemnize in remembrance of his divinity. This they stiled *ευλογία* (*eulogy*), a name which indicates the honour due to him as a supernatural being, in opposition to that obloquy, defamation and contempt (*βλασφημια, καταρα, αναθεμα*) with which his adversaries assailed him as the son of the Carpenter and a native of Nazareth. Now these peculiar and characteristic features in the Gnostic system the Apostle Paul here recognises; and he guards the converts against them, as being means only of deceiving the simple-minded. “ For such men are not servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of their own belly :
AND BY THEIR CHRESTUS, ORACLES, AND HONORARY FEAST * THEY DECEIVE THE HEARTS

* The original is thus, *Δια της χρησολογιας και ευλογιας εξαπατωσι τας καρδιας των ακακων*. Now the term *χρησολογια* is evidently composed of *χρησος* and *λογια*; and, what is remarkable, the Apostle himself appears to have coined the term, and neither he has employed it in any other place, nor any other writer after him. The word *ευλογια*, however, is used by the fathers in the very sense which the first Gnostics annexed to it. *Sacra Cæna vocatur ευλογια*. They are the words of *Suicerus*; See his *Lexicon*. The Apostle Paul, maintaining, in opposition to the deceivers, that the simple feast instituted by our Lord was intended to be commemorative of the *blood* and of the *body*, that is, of the *mortal part*, or of the *death* of Christ, and not of his being a *divine* or *immortal* Being, employs the term in a signification nearly allied to this.
Διο, αδελφοι μου αγαπητοι, φυγετε απο της ειδωλατριας—το ποτηριον της ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑΣ ὃ ευλογουμεν, ουχι κοιινωνια του αιματος του Χριστου εσι; τον αετον ὃν κλωμεν, ουχι κοιινωνια του σωματος του Χριστου εσι; i. e. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, flee from idolatry—that cup of praise which we praise, is it not a partaking of the BLOOD of

OF THE SIMPLE; (for your obedience is come abroad unto all. I rejoice therefore in you : but I wish you to be wise unto goodness and harmless unto evil) but the God of peace will quickly bruise Satan under your feet."

The object which they pretended to have before them, in thus adopting the pernicious maxim of telling falsehood to promote the truth, was *to deceive Satan*, a phrase which, divested of its symbolical signification, simply means, the leading men into a belief of the Gospel, in consequence of evading by false representations those unreasonable objections, which the mistaken notions and the evil principles of the world threw in the way of its progress. Now it is observable, that if we pass over the words in the parenthesis, and consider the subsequent in connection with the preceding part of the sentence, this will appear to be the pretence for their specious impostures, "And by their Chrestus, oracles, and honorary feast, they deceive the hearts of the simple—*but* the God of peace will quickly bruise Satan under your feet." As though he had said : "These men propagate their falsehoods under the pretext of deceiving Satan : but in reality

Christ ? The loaf which we break, is it not a partaking of the BODY of Christ ? Our Apostle, you will observe, intimates to his Corinthian friends, that if they followed the example of the impostors in considering the Lord Jesus as one of the demons or gods, and accordingly celebrated his festival, as commemorative of him in this view, and not of his suffering, they were guilty of *idolatry*. This idolatry he calls upon them to avoid, by regarding the cup and the bread in the light in which they were regarded by the Apostles ; namely, as symbolical of the *death*, not of the *divinity*, of the person celebrated, See Vol. ii. p. 428.

they deceive only those who, unlike themselves, possess innocent and guileless hearts. And as to Satan, the great adversary that retards the Gospel, the Almighty, instead of imposing upon him by lies, or opposing him with violence and contention, will speedily bruise him under your feet; and this he will do by means consistent with gentleness, peace and truth."

Our Lord wishing to prevent his Apostles from adopting the conduct pursued by the Gnostic teachers in the propagation of their system (see Vol. ii. p. 21—30), among many other excellent directions, delivered to them the following; "Be ye wise as the serpent, and harmless as the dove." This maxim, though dictated in opposition to them, the deceivers perverted into a justification of their own falsehoods; interpreting it thus, and omitting the last clause: "As the Serpent or Satan employed his wisdom to deceive the mother of mankind, so may you, after his example, employ the same mean to deceive the Serpent, and thus defeat him with his own weapons."* In order to rectify this wicked perversion of his Divine Master's precept, Paul thus writes to his brethren, "I wish you to be wise unto goodness, but unto evil to be harmless."—"My desire is, that the end you have in view should

* This perversion the Apostle Paul seems to have had in view, when he dictated the following sentence in respect to the deceivers. "I fear lest, as the Serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ." 2 Cor. xi. 2. The people in reference to whom he here speaks were the *Ophitæ*, or those Egyptian impostors, who taught that Christ was the same with the *Serpent*. See Epiphanius, p. 274. The language of Jesus addressed to Nicodemus, and the above maxim given to his disciples, they attempted to wrest into a confirmation of this doctrine.

ever be laudable, and that you should pursue it by methods consistent with truth and virtue. It were better that you possess no wisdom at all, than that you pervert it to sinister purposes. In all that is evil, therefore, shew yourselves as though you were entirely destitute of sagacity and skill; but in whatever is virtuous and praise-worthy display all the knowledge and all the prudence, which it is possible for man to acquire."

A circumstance in this place presents itself, which leads us to the men here stigmatised by the Apostle, as the authors of the doctrine inculcating the miraculous birth of our Lord. The plea, by which they attempted to justify this and other falsehoods propagated respecting him, was to *deceive the devil*. Now it is remarkable, that this very plea has been adopted by the supporters of that doctrine in after ages. When the objector to the truth of the tale asked, "If Mary did really conceive, while she was yet a virgin and unknown to Joseph, how came she at that very time to be espoused to him, and by that means expose herself to an unjust suspicion?" The usual reply was: "She was espoused in order to deceive the Devil. For the Devil, having heard that a virgin would be with child, observed the virgins; therefore, that the deceiver might be deceived, Joseph espoused her who was ever a virgin." This argument which was borrowed, not as is supposed from Ignatius,* but from

* *Quare non de simplice virgine, sed de desponsata concipitur?— Ut partus ejus claretur Diabolo; dum eam putat non de virgine, sed de uxore generatum.* They are the words of Jerom, quoted from Ori-

the first inventors of the story, contemptible as it now is, had something like meaning in its original application. For divested of its figure, the phrase *to deceive the devil* meant the defeating of the principle of evil, by removing those difficulties which it opposed to the prevalence of the Gospel. But the mystic or internal signification, being in process of time lost, and the literal one only retained, the expression degenerated into rank nonsense and absurdity.

The sentiments which Simon and his associates had fabricated in Rome, were, in consequence of their expulsion disseminated over the provinces, and imported as we shall see hereafter, into the churches established by the Great Apostle of the Gentiles. This effect had in some degree taken place before he penned this epistle : and his apprehension of it, while now writing the context, led him to warn the Roman Church against the danger of giving them any farther countenance, and

gen, who borrowed the idea from the epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians, Cap. xix. But every one of the epistles ascribed to that Apostolic man, is in the judgment of the best critics much interpolated. Ignatius, who received his doctrines from the Apostles, could not have countenanced that of the miraculous conception. For the Apostles were very far from disseminating such a falsehood. It could not, therefore, have been supported by any honest man that professed with truth to have been their disciple.—The plea of deceiving Satan, has been copied not only by Origen, but by all the fathers after him. The reply given to the above question, is that of Theophylact in his commentaries on Matthew, p. 8. Specimens of their reasoning on this subject are produced by Dr. Priestley in *his Early Opinions*, Vol. iv. p. 26—55. No candid person can peruse the passages there adduced, without feeling the difficulties and embarrassment, which the doctrine of the miraculous birth of Jesus has entailed upon the Christian religion ; and the liveliest pleasure in perceiving that the tale forms no part of the word of God.

thus, by their example, encouraging the reception of those sentiments into other churches. “ Avoid them : for such men are not the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of their own belly ; and by their Chrestus, oracles and honorary feast, they deceive the hearts of the simple. FOR YOUR OBEDIENCE IS COME ABROAD UNTO ALL.” As though he had written : “ Expel those men from the church, and disclaim all connection with them as your brethren in Christ : for their doctrines being designed, under the specious appearance of friendship for the Christian cause, to bring it into disgrace, are every where propagated ; and they prove the unhappy instruments of seducing many well meaning persons from the truth, and from that purity of morals which distinguishes its genuine professors.” The venerable author thus concludes his epistle. “ Now unto him who is able to establish you according to this Gospel of Jesus Christ by me proclaimed, wherein a mystery hath been revealed, which hath been kept secret from the ages of old, but is now made plain by the Scriptures of the Prophets, and published to all the Gentiles, according to an appointment of the everlasting God, for their obedience to the faith—to God only wise be the glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”

This conclusion, you will observe, contains a summary view of the true Gospel, in contradistinction to that which the deceivers taught. 1. He recommends the believers to the God of Israel, who, having power to establish them, and possessing all wisdom, is alone the proper object of their religious veneration. “ Now unto him who hath power to enable you to stand firm—to God only wise, be the glory for ever. Amen.”

2. He intimates that the pretended Supreme God of the Gnostics is so far from deserving their religious homage, that even Jesus Christ however justly revered, loved and obeyed as the messenger of heaven, is by no means to be viewed as an object of solemn praise, but as the medium through whom all praise should be ascribed to the only Almighty and Omniscient Jehovah. —“ To God only wise, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST for ever. Amen.”

3. In this conclusion, as in the beginning, Paul holds forth to their attention, his own Gospel in opposition to the doctrine which the anti-apostolic teachers inculcated: and his prayer is, that neither the specious arts of these pretended friends, nor the violence of their open enemies, might divert them from the belief of it. He insinuates, moreover, that his Gospel was conformable to the preaching of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ.—“ Unto him who hath the power to enable you to stand firm ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL, AND THE PREACHING OF JESUS CHRIST.”

4. In vindication of the law and the prophets, which the Gnostics rejected, Paul farther declares that the doctrine which Jesus Christ proclaimed, was founded on a mystic or internal signification, which he unfolded or revealed, but which from ancient times lay unobserved in those sacred oracles.—“ Unto him who hath power to enable you to stand firm according to my Gospel and to the preaching of Jesus Christ, *according to the developement of a mystery, which hath been kept secret* from the ages of old, but is now clearly disclosed through the prophetic Scriptures.*

* Κατὰ ἀποκαλύψιν μυστηρίου χρονοῖς αἰωνίοις σέσιγημένου: According to the revelation of the mystery which WAS SILENT from the

5. Finally, Our author leads the converts to conclude that the Almighty, so far from confining his parental regard to a single people, included the whole human race within his providential care; that he had from eternity decreed the nations should become obedient to the faith, and thus participate with the Jews in the privileges of his children; and that this God who, though hitherto unknown to the Gentiles, existed from eternal ages, (and not the Samaritan unknown God) was now made known to them by the Gospel: "But now clearly disclosed through the prophetic scriptures, ACCORDING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EVERLASTING GOD, made (at length) known to all the Gentiles unto an obedience to the faith."



I shall conclude with a few inferences, which the view now taken of this celebrated epistle suggests. By him, who admits the solidity of the ground on which I have proceeded in the explanation of it, the justice and importance of these inferences will readily be acknowledged. They will, however, receive abundant confirmation from the analytic review, which I intend hereafter to take of the remaining epistles. For this reason I purpose here to give only a brief and

ages of old. The term *σεσιγημενον* is very peculiar; and the use of it no where else occurs, excepting in the Gnostic School, whence our author has copied it. Irenæus thus writes respecting their *Æons*, *Αἰῶνες τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν, εἰ σεσιγημένοι καὶ μὴ γινωσκόμενοι.* The word had its origin in *Σιγή*, (silence) or the fictitious divinity, which the deceivers represent as being with *Bythos* from eternal ages: at these eternal ages, or *Æons*, our Apostle seems here to glance by the use of the phrase *εν χρονοις αιωνιαις.* The evil Spirit which worked in these sons of destruction, Paul elsewhere calls the *Æon of this world.* See Ephes. ii, 2.

simple statement of them, deferring their farther justification and enlargement, until I arrive at the conclusion of the whole.

First, then, the Gospel which the Apostle Paul preached, comprehended chiefly the three following articles, the HUMANITY, the REAL SUFFERING, and the RESURRECTION of the Christ. On the *first* of these he insisted as essential to salvation, because it followed, contrary to the position of his opponents, that if the Christ was in reality a human being, and the same with Jesus of Nazareth, he must have actually *suffered*: On the *second*, because the death of Christ was previously requisite to establish the certainty of his resurrection: On the *third*, because his resurrection from the dead constitutes the only solid foundation on which can be erected the hope of the future resurrection of mankind, and consequently forms the only consideration which, by exhibiting the prospect of a new life, and the sublimity of a future judgment, furnishes adequate motives to the eradication of vice and the cultivation of virtue.

Secondly, The doctrines, therefore, which teach that Jesus was a supernatural being, and supernaturally born; that he descended from heaven to rescue the human race from the sentence of eternal death, by paying to the Almighty an infinite satisfaction for their sins; that all mankind were doomed to endless misery, for the venial offence of their progenitors; that in the transgression of Adam, they forfeited not only their hope but their innocence, and became depraved even before they incurred guilt, and criminal in being endowed with life; that while a select happy few, contra-

ry to their original inclinations, have been arbitrarily fore-ordained to everlasting felicity, the bulk of men are left for no guilt of their own to perish, or rather to live in eternal torments ; and that some spiritual influence called *grace*, or faith in certain incomprehensible propositions, and not the cultivation of virtue, qualifies men for the kingdom of God—these doctrines, which originated in the Jewish and Pagan superstitions, which have since been incorporated with the religion of Jesus during the dark ages, and are believed as sacred truths by the majority of Christians even in these times—these, I say, so far from being comprehended in the Apostolic doctrine, are contradicted in it : since they are but branches, grown indeed in different forms and transplanted into different soils, of that very system which the Apostles themselves opposed.

The notion that Christ was a pre-existent super-angelic spirit dwelling in the body of Jesus—this notion which was revived by *Arius* towards the beginning of the fourth century, and which is now embraced by many good and otherwise intelligent men called after him *Arians*—is evidently the same with that which Simon Magus and Cerinthus first introduced into the Christian church ; namely, that the Christ was an *Æon*, *god*, or angel which descended into the man Jesus at his birth or at his baptism. The impostors maintained, that Christ was not the son of the Creator, but of a God superior to him ; and that he came, not to co-operate with Jehovah, but to rescue mankind from subjection to his controul, and from the influence of his arbitrary commandments. The assertions of our Lord himself levelled against these opinions, that he was the son of the Universal Father, that he came from him,

and acted with his authority and assistance, and therefore in point of design was *one* with him, laid a foundation for the second article in the trinitarian faith, that is, for the notion which, in process of time, was adopted, that Christ, instead of being *greater* than God, as the first vouchers of his divinity supposed, was *equal* to him; and instead of being different from the Universal Father as the offspring of a superior divinity, was the same in *substance* or *essence* with him as his own Son. See Vol. ii. p. 391, 416—419.

From the supposition that the Creator was a malevolent Being, it followed of course that he wished not the happiness of his moral offspring, nor consented to their deliverance from the sentence of eternal death, unless an ample compensation were made for their acquittal. Hence the idea, so dishonourable to the Father of the Universe, that he required the death of one equal to himself as the only means of reconciling him to his children. In opposition to the malevolence which those enemies of the true Gospel imputed to God, and upon which, in after times, was founded the doctrine of Christ's atonement, the Apostle in this and in all his other epistles represents him as the benevolent Parent of mankind, exercising mercy towards the Gentiles as well as Jews; loving the world in such a manner as to give his most beloved Son to die in their behalf; forgiving the most abandoned their sins, and proclaiming salvation to all without distinction on the simple terms of repentance and reformation.

The Creator of the world being, according to the deceivers, malevolent and depraved, it followed as an obvious consequence, that his human offspring naturally

partook of his malevolence and depravity. Hence the pernicious tenet that man is wicked by nature—a tenet, which, as it supposes, in the original frame and constitution of the human mind, an irresistible bias to whatever is evil, furnishes at once a powerful incentive, and a specious apology for crimes. Hence, too, *regeneration*, which properly interpreted signifies a thorough eradication of bad dispositions and habits, or a complete reformation of manners, is construed to mean a supernatural change effected by the Holy Spirit.

A notion, derived from whatever source, was transmitted among the Jews through successive generations, that all disease, and even natural and moral death, were the effects of sin; and that the forfeiture of his primitive innocence by the founder of our race, had entailed these evils upon all his progeny. This mythological notion flowed with the current of Jewish and Pagan superstitions into the sanctuary of the Christian Church; and upon the sandy sediment it there deposited, was in after days founded the Calvinistic doctrine of *Original Sin*, and of eternal death pronounced upon mankind for the transgression of Adam.

That a few favourite persons are predestined to be eternally happy, while the majority of the human race are abandoned to everlasting misery, is also a doctrine borrowed from the Jews, who vainly gloried in being the *elect* or chosen people of God, while the other nations of the earth were doomed to perish in ignorance and vice.

In opposition to the Judaizing Zealots, who adhered to ceremonial observances, as the mean of securing the divine favour, Paul preached *faith* in Jesus; mean-

ing by the term the exercise of refined piety and benevolence, arising from a firm belief in a future life, illustrated and confirmed by the resurrection of Christ. In process of time, however, it was forgotten or overlooked, that the Apostle insisted on faith, in preference to ritual-works, merely because it was a more efficacious principle of conduct; and from this oversight the word became to signify an implicit assent of the judgment to creeds of human invention. Hence, to the dishonour of the Christian doctrine, faith thus applied, has been made instrumental to exclude all claim to the favour of God, resulting from the practice of virtue, and blindly urged for ages as the only solid ground on which a Christian could erect the hope of salvation.

Thirdly, The frequency with which the Apostles mention the *blood* of Christ, the strong language in which they describe his *death*, and the great *efficacy* which they connect with it, OWE THEIR ORIGIN and PROPRIETY to the Gnostic teachers, who denied the reality of his body, of his suffering, and of his subsequent resurrection; and who thereby rendered ineffectual the powerful influence, which the belief of a future state, through the medium of those facts, produced in the lives and tempers of those who embraced them.

Fourthly, From the decomposition of this epistle, we recognize at the bottom the existence of the facts, contained in the first volume of the Development; namely, the introduction of the Christian doctrine into Rome, the conversion of the Jews and Egyptians, the formation and prevalence of the Gnostic system, the crimes of the impostors, the opposition they made to the government, the accusations brought against the Christi-

ans, and their expulsion from the city, &c. &c. To these, frequent and clear allusions are discernible. The epistle indeed is founded upon them, and hence it derives its beauty, propriety, and explanation.

Fifthly, The views which the Zealots and impostors cherished, and which the Apostle Paul opposed, demonstrate that he was himself governed by no such views, i. e. was neither actuated by a blind zeal, nor by a desire of wilfully imposing upon his followers. For the doctrinal points which he maintained against his opponents, the intrepid behaviour with which he sustained false shame, labour and pain in support of the Gospel, and the high virtues, which by his example as well as his preaching he recommended to the converts, render it impossible that he had the weakness to be himself deceived, or the wickedness to deceive others. The *contrast*, in which we here behold our great and venerable Apostle, is indeed forcible and captivating; as it serves to place in their true and native light, his moral and intellectual qualifications. The leading features which, viewed in this point of observation, mark his character, are divine wisdom, unbiassed integrity; an inflexible adherence, in spite of scorn, reproach, and persecution, to those principles which he knew to be true; a noble superiority to the false philosophy of the times; an utter contempt of such knowledge as did not conduce to virtue; and, finally, a holy disdain of the pernicious maxim, that it was lawful to propagate falsehood, under the pretence of promoting truth, and to blend with the pure word of God, which he was commissioned to teach, the fictions of men, however specious and flattering to his cause. Though taught

in the school of the Pharisees, that rites and ceremonies formed essential parts of true religion, he now insists upon their abolition as inadequate to effect the ends of virtue; and recommends to general reception the belief of a new life through the death of Jesus, as the only efficacious mean of producing repentance and reformation. Though he once indulged the fond persuasion, that Jehovah was in a peculiar manner the tutelary God of Israel, he now represents him, in opposition to the Zealots, as the Father of the whole human race, exercising his parental regard to all the tribes of men, as well as to the descendants of Abraham. Against the Jews he maintained that the Gentiles might share in the blessings of the Gospel without submitting to the works of the law, and on the sole condition of obeying its moral precepts. Against the Gentile converts, on the contrary, he asserted the former privileges of the Jews, and urged the duty of respecting and pitying them in their present state of degradation and apostasy.

To the Christian Church, he recommends the expulsion of those persons, however distinguished by rank or pretended wisdom, who sought under the fair profession of the new faith only to gratify their love of power, of riches, or of pleasure. In a bold and indignant language he arraigns the impostors that affected to be the instructors of others, while they neglected to teach themselves: And though he openly exposes their artifices, rejects their falsehoods, and humbles their pride, he on no occasion treats them with unnecessary asperity, but endeavours rather to conciliate their fa-

your than incur their resentment. Averse to delineate with his own hand, the character of the false teachers, he selects, with great skill and delicacy, passages from the prophetic writings which, like mirrors, reflected their true image to those whom they sought to deceive. Such is the light in which the Apostle Paul appears, when we contemplate him, in the course of this epistle, opposing zealots and impostors. The comparison between him and his false brethren cannot fail to heighten the native lustre of his character. We behold him exerting his great and unclouded faculties in the cause of mankind; and assuming, in opposition to enthusiasm, superstition and imposture, an attitude at once mild, dignified, and commanding: And the enthusiasm, superstition, and imposture, which he thus counteracted, invest him in return with additional splendour; and, like the dark clouds of the morning, exhibit him to the distant beholder, adorned in all the glories which the newly risen Sun of righteousness had spread over the moral horizon.

Sixthly, No reader, who has perused the remaining writings, which Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian in ancient times, and which Voltaire, Paine, and others in modern days, have published against the Christian religion, needs to be informed, that the principal objections urged against its divine original, are drawn from the articles of the orthodox faith. The doctrines of the divinity and miraculous birth of Christ, of the atonement which he is said to have paid for the sins of mankind, and the necessity of believing implicitly opinions unsupported by reason—these with others

of the same stamp, which, as it has been justly observed, have concealed the Almighty from the views of men, and thrown the luminous orb of reason into shades, supply the most formidable weapons, by which the enemies of the Gospel have attempted to demolish the fair edifice of the Christian hope; and erect a temple consecrated to infidelity, into which, as into an asylum, mankind might flee from the restraints of conscience and the obligations of moral virtue. But from the view, which I have taken of this epistle, it appears, and, from the view which I propose to take of the other epistles, the more satisfactorily will appear, that these doctrines, however essential to the orthodox believer, form no part of the religion which was taught by Christ and his Apostles. They, therefore, together with the conclusion erected upon them, tumble to the ground.

Seventhly, The manner which the Gospel prevailed in Rome, and the wonderful consequences which followed its introduction and prevalence in that city, afford a new and additional evidence for the reality of Christ's miracles. Immediately after his public appearance his fame spread abroad, and, as soon as time could carry it, reached the metropolis of the empire, some thousands of miles distant from the theatre of his mission. At first it was vaguely rumoured, that a person appeared in Judea, proclaiming the kingdom of the eternal God, and healing, in proof of his delegation, all manner of diseases among the people. But this rumour continually gained strength and credit; till, confirmed by multitudes that arrived from that country, it was at length universally regarded as a real fact. General attention was now excited; meetings were held to en-

quire who the messenger was, and what might be the purport of his message. The Jews in that city looked up to him as their promised Messiah; the Egyptians, notwithstanding their national prejudices, could not deny his divine commission, and submitting to his claims, fondly traced his pedigree to the supreme god of their country. The ardour of zeal, and the violence of dispute, excited in the city tumultuous commotions; which, concurring with the crimes of imposture and the misrepresentations of malice, occasioned the expulsion of the contending parties. The philologers around the person of the Prince, pronounced the object of their curiosity to be a celestial being descended from heaven for the benefit of mankind; and the emperor himself proposed to rank him among the tutelardivinities of Rome. How are we to account for consequences so remote, and for events so stupendous? It is incumbent upon Infidelity to return a satisfactory answer to the question. Jesus Christ did not come recommended to the attention of mankind by superior eloquence and learning. He was not arrayed with the splendour of wealth, nor supported by the authority of power. Considered in a personal and political view, he sustained a character the reverse of this picture. He was the son of an obscure carpenter, who of course earned his bread by his daily labours. Such appears to have been his poverty, that he had no where to lay his head. So far from being educated in the school of human wisdom, he astonished his countrymen, when they discovered that he was able to read. The contempt, in which was held the place of his birth, had entailed ignominy upon his name; and so mortifying was the reflection of his having died the death of a

slave and a malefactor ; that even his own disciples, for a while, gave up the flattering hope of his being the Redeemer of Israel. How then, I repeat, are we to account for consequences so remote, for effects so stupendous, produced by a person, humanly considered, so insignificant ? In nothing can we discern the adequate cause, but in the reality of his miracles. Upon the supposition, that he actually wrought the things ascribed to him in the evangelical records, these consequences and effects, so far from being surprising or improbable, were matters of course.

Eighthly, The scheme, moreover, which the bitterest enemies of the Gospel, on its first promulgation, planned for counteracting its effects, affords a strong presumptive argument for the truth of the mighty works which the founder is said to have performed. Jesus Christ, by his discoveries, marked more clearly the line of distinction, which reason had faintly drawn between virtue and vice, and which the system of Epicurus now prevalent, not only in Pagan countries, but even in Judea, had a tendency to obliterate. By new and more powerful sanctions he also invited mankind to pursue the former and to avoid the latter. These sanctions he grounded on the sublime doctrine of a future retribution, which he was delegated to teach ; and the truth of his delegation, he authenticated by many public miracles, and particularly by the miracle of his resurrection. Simon Magus and his disciples, who at first joined the declared adversaries of the Christian cause, perceiving the efforts of open violence to be ineffectual, concerted a plan admirably adapted, under the mask of friendship, to undermine a

religion which, by enlightening and reforming mankind, threatened to defeat the views of priestcraft, ambition and sensuality. Borrowing two false maxims from the Epicurean school, in which they had been educated, (namely, that the senses furnish no true criterion of the reality of facts, and that the gods, though uninterested in the affairs, sometimes appeared in the form of men) they maintained, in countries where Jesus was not personally known, and where therefore any falsehood concerning him might be propagated with the less danger of being refuted, that the Christ was not a human being, but a God, or a demon, in the mere likeness of a human being; whereas in Judea, Samaria, and other adjacent regions, where his person, actions, and the circumstances of his death were actually known to the inhabitants, and remained fresh in their memories, they taught that this demon was incorporated with the man Jesus during his ministry, but forsook him on his apprehension and death. Hence it followed, that as Christ was not in reality a man, he did not in reality suffer death; and as he did not in reality suffer death, he did not in reality rise from the dead; and as he did not in reality rise from the dead, there could be no resurrection of the dead. Thus the life and immortality, which the Saviour brought to light in his Gospel, were again veiled in impenetrable darkness to those who embraced this artful system; and the sanctions, by which the new faith enforced the cultivation of superior virtue, deprived entirely of their force. Accordingly, upon the lives of the impostors, the Christian doctrine, in which they affected to believe, had no moral influence. On the contrary, they became, in a two-fold degree, more the children of hell than they were

before. Now the deceivers, it is contended, would never have recourse to a fiction so wild and chimerical in itself, so remote from the dictates of common sense, so opposite to the conviction of all who knew the person, heard the discourses, and witnessed the actions of Jesus—to this fiction, it is contended, they never would have had recourse, in order to preclude the consequence obviously and irresistibly drawn from his miracles, if they could with the least plausibility and effect have denied their reality. These miracles formed the foundation on which was erected the edifice of the Christian faith; and they must have known that, if the foundation were not solid, the edifice itself would have fallen by the slightest attack; nor can it be supposed, that a wicked and able adversary would, in his attempt to take the citadel of our hope, have endeavoured to undermine its fortifications by absurd and impracticable wiles, had he not, from experience and observation, found them to be impregnable to an open and direct assault. Be then but satisfied of the existence and object of the antichristian system above described, and you must allow that, what the folly and wickedness of men designed to be the *grave* of the Christian religion, the wisdom and power of God has converted into a *monument*, on which are inscribed, in legible characters, the mighty works performed by its illustrious founder.

Ninthly, The Apostle Paul, in as much as in all his epistles he opposes the Gnostic teachers, was unavoidably led, on some occasions, to use their terms, to borrow their images, and to copy their allusions. Sometimes too, when he contradicts sentiments that were false and unphilosophical, he, under terms and

images thus borrowed, conveyed to his readers sentiments, analogous indeed to those which he refuted, but at the same time true and philosophical. This circumstance furnished the very men, whom he proscribed, with a plausible pretence for asserting, in places where his authority was predominant, and where he was not personally present, that Paul himself, in his letters, occasionally confirmed their doctrines. Irenæus (Lib. i. Chap. xvi. xvii. xviii.) has recorded many specimens of the manner in which they perverted the language of Christ, of his Apostles, and of the prophets, into a justification of the tenets which they taught. And his testimony to this fact is thus remarkably corroborated by the Apostle Peter. "Wherefore, beloved, under this expectation, endeavour earnestly to be found by him in peace without spot or blemish: and account this patience of our Lord to be Salvation unto you; as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given him, wrote unto you: as indeed in all his letters, speaking in them upon this subject, which hath some things hard to be understood, WHICH THINGS THE FOOLISH AND UNSTABLE WREST, AS ALSO THE OTHER SCRIPTURES, TO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION." 2 Pet. iii. 14—17. Now what the impostors did through the wickedness and depravity of their hearts, has, from a cause less guilty indeed, but by no means honourable, been done by the supporters of orthodoxy in every age. In imitation of those who first corrupted the Christian religion, they actually appeal to the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, in the defence of their corrupt principles; though his language is directly levelled against them; though the blaze of his eloquence has in every quarter set them on fire, as constituting

the wood, hay, stubble which the deceivers built upon another foundation than the man Jesus ; and though his divine authority exorcised them for a while, as so many demons, from the greater body of Christians.

Finally, The plan, upon which this epistle has been analysed, furnishes, I conceive, two very strong arguments in proof of its *authenticity*. It derives its explanation from circumstances and events which happened in the earliest age of the Christian Church : and it contains sentiments which could have come, neither from the Gnostics, nor from the fathers, nor from any other except an Apostolic teacher.



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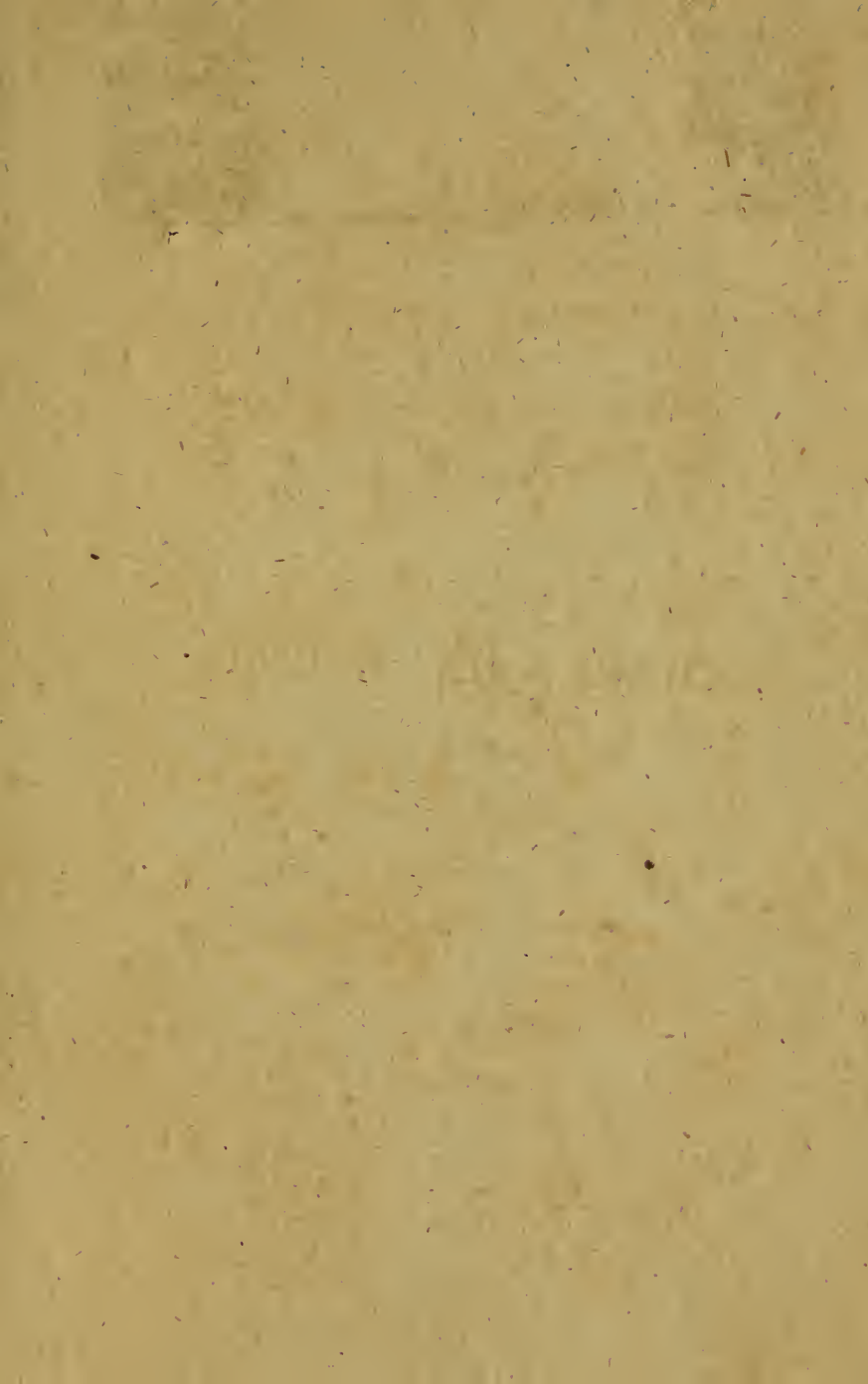
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